

FEBRUARY 1992/\$2/\$4.95

Sight and Sound

EVERY
NEW FILM
AND VIDEO
REVIEWED
INSIDE

Paranoia movies:
Coppola to Stone's 'JFK'

Filming reality:
do all documentaries lie?

New cinema in Europe:
Paris, Lisbon, Brussels

**Scorsese's
avenging angel**

De Niro and 'Cape Fear'



THE LONDON • INTERNATIONAL • FILM SCHOOL

- Training film makers for over 30 years •
- Graduates now working worldwide •
- Located in Covent Garden in the heart of London •
- Recognised by A.C.T.T. •
- 16mm documentary & 35mm studio filming •
- Two year Diploma course in film making
commences three times a year: January, April, September •

**London International Film School, Department S31
25 Shelton Street, London WC2H 9HP
071-836 0826**

Sight and Sound
(Incorporating Monthly
Film Bulletin)
Volume 1 Issue 10 (NS)
21 Stephen Street
London W1P 1PL
Telephone 071 255 1444
Facsimile 071 436 2327

Editorial

Editor
Philip Dodd
Associate editors
Pam Cook
Richard Combs
Assistant editor
Rebecca Russell
Editorial assistant
Colette O'Reilly
Contributing editors
J. Hoberman
Pervaiz Khan
John Powers
Mike O'Pray
Tony Rayns
Jane Root
Amy Taubin
Sub-editor
Vicky Wilson
Picture editor
Millie Simpson
Design and art direction
Esterson Lackersteen

Production

Production director
John Smoker
Production
Spy Graphics
Imagesetting
Opus Bureau
Origination
Precise Litho
Printer
Chase Web (St Ives plc)

Advertising sales

Mark Pearson
Hucksters Ltd
47 Leander Road
London SW2 2ND
Telephone 081 671 1351
Facsimile 081 678 7260

Business

Managing director
BFI publishing
Colin MacCabe
Publishing director
Caroline Moore
Advertising manager
Mark Pearson
Telephone 081 671 1351
Marketing assistant
Susan Law
Newsstand distribution
UMD, 1 Benwell Road
London N7 7AX
Telephone 071 700 4600
Bookshop distribution
Central Books
99 Wallis Road
London E9 5LN
Telephone 081 986 4854
US distribution
Eastern News Distributors Inc.
1130 Cleveland Road
Sandusky, OH 44870

Annual subscription rates

UK £25.00
Europe/overseas
surface mail £30.00
Europe airmail £32.00
Overseas airmail £52.00
Special rates apply to BFI
members, details available
from Sight and Sound
marketing department
For queries regarding your
subscription contact:
Subscription department
Sight and Sound, 3rd Floor
3/4 Hardwick Street
London EC1R 4RY
Telephone 071 837 7765
Facsimile 071 278 8776

Binders for one year's issues:
UK £7.00. Overseas surface mail
£9.00. Available from Sight and
Sound marketing department



Published monthly by the
British Film Institute
ISSN 0037-4806

Sight and Sound



Kevin Costner in 'JFK': 22



The art of documentary: 26



Julie Delpy in 'Voyager': 58

Features

Sacred and profane

Wildly baroque and prodigiously
movie-literate, Scorsese's *Cape
Fear* reminds us why we should
celebrate the director, argues
J. Hoberman
Plus Jenny Diski compares family
affairs in the two *Cape Fear* films **8**

Hall of mirrors

On set with the magical Raúl Ruiz,
Jonathan Romney watches his
film about a marquis, prosthetic
legs and a painter unfold
Plus Ian Christie on an exhibition
curated by Ruiz on the expulsion
of the Moors from Spain **14**

Homelands

Michel Khleifi and Omar
Al-Qattan, two Palestinian
film-makers, talk with Philip
Dodd about Arab culture and a
new cinema made in Europe **18**

John and Oliver's bogus adventure

Alexander Cockburn on *JFK*, the
history of Vietnam and Kennedy
Plus Adam Barker on paranoia
movies from Coppola to *JFK* **22**

Invisible eye

What kind of a beast is
documentary?, asks Andrew
Britton, exploring films from *Man
with a Movie Camera* to *Trials of Life*
Plus Roger Bolton, documentary
film-maker, wants more exuberant
and biased documentaries **26**

Regulars

Editorial Made in Europe **3**

London Michael Eaton on *The
Grass Arena*, films and movies **4**

Paris Has television smothered
cinema with its love?, asks
Charles Penwarden **5**

Business Peter Biskind on the
state of Hollywood's finances **6**

Obsession Wilson Harris on
The Third Man, *Secret Ceremony*
and tainted histories **31**

Books News in the US; Eisenstein
in Mexico; Popular culture in
Latin America; *Bonfire of the
Vanities*; Indonesian cinema;
Global advertising; Women's
voices in Hollywood cinema **32**

Obituaries Bob Baker on the
movie people who died in 1991 **36**

Letters The actor as auteur;
what makes a gay film gay;
art school cinema **63**

If... Benjamin Woolley on open
architecture tv **64**

Competition **64**

Cover: Robert De Niro in *Cape Fear*.
Photograph by Phillip Caruso

Film reviews

All I Want for Christmas **38**

Barton Fink **39**

Curly Sue **40**

Dahong Denglong Gaogao
Gua/Raise the Red Lantern **41**

Death in Brunswick **42**

Enchanted April **43**

Favour, the Watch and the Very
Big Fish, The/Rue Saint-Sulpice **56**

For the Boys **44**

Freddy's Dead:
The Final Nightmare **45**

Hors la vie **46**

Jacquot de Nantes **47**

JFK **48**

K2 **50**

Life on a String/
Bian Zou Bian Chang **50**

Little Man Tate **51**

Monk, The **52**

My Girl **53**

People Under the Stairs, The **54**

Pleasure Principle, The **55**

Raise the Red Lantern/
Dahong Denglong Gaogao Gua **41**

Rue Saint-Sulpice/The Favour, the
Watch and the Very Big Fish **56**

Tales from the Darkside:
The Movie **57**

Voyager **58**

Year of the Gun **59**

Video reviews

Mark Kermode and William
Green review all this
month's releases **60**

**Next issue
on sale
25 February**

Out of it in 'Hors
la vie': 46



"...a delightful film, winningly performed and intelligently handled... a big winner all the way"

FILM REVIEW

Little Man Tate

Jodie Foster Dianne Wiest

A SCOTT RUBIN/PEGGY RAISKI PRODUCTION JODIE FOSTER DIANNE WUEST "LITTLE MAN TATE" HARRY CONNICK, JR.
AND ADAM HANN-BYRD WITH MARK ISHAM COSTUME DESIGNER LYNZEE KINGMAN, A.C.E. PRODUCTION DESIGNER JON HUTMAN DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY MIKE SOUTHERN, B.S.C.
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS RANDY STONE SCOTT FRANK PRODUCED BY SCOTT RUBIN PEGGY RAISKI DIRECTED BY JODIE FOSTER

ORION PICTURES Release
ORION PICTURES CORPORATION ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

STARTS JANUARY 17 EXCLUSIVE PRESENTATION

ODEON HAYMARKET (071) 839 7697

STARTS JANUARY 31 AT CINEMAS ACROSS LONDON

Made in Europe

Contributors to this issue

Adam Barker is at present on a Fulbright scholarship at UCLA

Peter Biskind is executive editor of *Premiere*

Roger Bolton's many documentaries include *Death on the Rock*

Andrew Britton lectures at Reading University and is writing a book on documentary film

Alexander Cockburn's books include *Corruptions of Empire*

Jenny Diski's most recent novel is *Happily Ever After*

Michael Eaton's screenwriting credits include *Fellow Traveller*

Caryl Flinn is the author of a forthcoming book on Hollywood film music, *Strains of Utopia*

Lizzie Francke is writing a study of women screenwriters

Christopher Frayling is currently writing a biography of Sergio Leone

J. Hoberman is the author of a recently published volume on Yiddish cinema

Graham Murdoch has written widely on the media and corporatism

Christopher Palmer is a film music composer and orchestrator

Charles Penwarden is a Paris-based freelance writer

Tony Rayns has written widely on many aspects of cinema

Brian Winston is dean of the School of Communications, Penn State University

Benjamin Woolley has recently completed a book on Virtual Reality

Talk of the crisis of European cinema is deafening. And in 1992, the year of Europe, the talk is likely to reach a crescendo as plans to sustain European film culture at last struggle to find some substantial and adequate institutional form.

If certain commentators are to be believed, the threats to European cinema are legion. They include the renewed *Pax Americana*, which is likely to have a cultural as well as a political and overtly economic imperative, threatening to strengthen the US stranglehold over distribution, production and exhibition spaces in Europe. (Although, as Peter Biskind's Business columns have recorded, US corporate power is itself under pressure from Japan.)

The other major threat to European cinema is said to come from television, that troublesome and, according to some, Oedipally inclined sibling which, as Charles Penwarden's column shows, breaks cinematic hearts even in France, one of the strongest film cultures in Europe.

But perhaps anguish over the future of European cinema ought to be suspended until we have actually examined what we mean by 'European cinema'. Clearly at one level, the phrase refers to an extraordinary and rich history that runs from the early years of the century to – pick your director – let's say, Wim Wenders. And that is an unshakable achievement. But if we are to look at the future of cinema in Europe rather than the past, we might be better advised to speak in support of a *cinema made in Europe* rather than *European cinema* – and our allegiance to one rather than the other will shape the necessary attitudes and policies.

In the new Europe, one which still talks an old language, the category 'European cinema' is too often used to exclude as much as to include, as the conversation between the two Europe-based Palestinian film-makers, Michel Khleifi and Omar Al-Qattan, shows. Even when

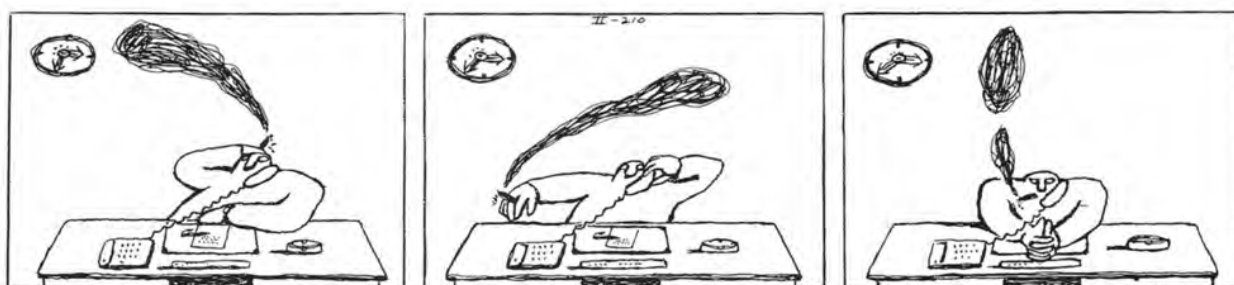
Palestinian films are shown in Europe, as one of them says, they are seen on television around midnight – perhaps so as not to frighten the 'natives'. Ian Christie's report on the Chilean film-maker Raúl Ruiz's Paris exhibition on the 1492 expulsion of the Moors from Spain reminds us that exclusive and racial definitions of Europe reach far back in history – and if Le Pen's successes in France are a barometer, can still be mobilised.

A minority of the voices anxious about European cinema certainly seem shaped by old definitions, with their appeals to European purity and their implicit belief in a moment before 'multi-culturalism' – which had no historical reality. Indeed, the espousal of a cinematic version of Fortress Europe is historically ignorant as well as aesthetically bankrupt. The most cursory knowledge of European cinema would show how it has been directed not towards sustaining some lineage of European purity, but outwards to something more complex. In its heyday, *Cahiers du cinéma* helped to resuscitate the aesthetics of French cinema by engaging in a dialogue with US popular cinema; landmarks of European cinema – whether *Fear Eats the Soul* or *The Four Feathers* – are clearly engaged in more than a geographical dialectic with 'elsewhere'. And as Jonathan Romney's set report on the French-based Ruiz shows, parts of Latin American cinema see themselves in certain ways as European.

The wonderful promiscuity of Ruiz – whose heterogeneous films draw on US popular films, television, European art cinema and Latin American cinema and history – is a good example of one of the cinemas to be made in a future Europe. There have to be policies to sustain cinema – but they need to be policies which encourage the intermingling of forms and traditions and the creation of new mongrel cinemas. Purity is for the angels.

JERRY ON LINE #1

Peter Lydon – James Sillavan ©



'Jerry, I was tricked into seeing a foreign movie last night, but you know something – I liked it. In fact I liked it so much I wanna remake it. It's chock full of colourful characters, crazy black humour with a snappy visual style, but we won't let any of that get in our way...'

Grassing on the movies

Michael Eaton

In this wonderful business of ours, conversation from time to time turns to the subtle yet crucial distinction between a film and a movie. Such deliberations characteristically occur when a producer, brow furrowed with genuine, empathetic disappointment, tosses back a script to the writer: "You've given me a *film*... I'm in the market for *movies*". Amid the Jesuitical speculations on this delicate opposition, one truism remains constant: in Britain we just don't know how to make 'movies'.

The nebulous differences between these two phenomena are highlighted for me by Frank Deasy's adaptation of John Healy's autobiography, *The Grass Arena*, stunningly directed by Gilles MacKinnon and shown on 19 January in the BBC's *Screen Two* series (the very title of this series and of Channel 4's *Film on Four* point to the problem). In many ways, this film bears comparison with a movie still playing at a cinema near you. Like Terry Gilliam's *The Fisher King*, *The Grass Arena* is about redemption. Its milieu is the streets and gutters of a major metropolis and its *dramatis personae* are down-and-outs. Both stories illuminate the general by focusing on the particular – apparently a ground rule of good drama. But there the resemblance ends. MacKinnon's film will not be seen on the big screen – financed by television, it goes straight on to the box, without even desultory art house distribution. A definition begins to emerge: in Britain 'films' exist on and for television.

A movie, we are told, demands a strong (usually male) central character whom the audience will learn to love and a star will consent to play. The guy doesn't have to be perfect – a flaw or two gives him something to overcome. We're all searching for redemption – since the church can't help us anymore, why not turn to cinema? So our hero must have a clearly defined quest. His journey, and the obstacles he must confront in order to attain his goal, cannot be ambiguous.

Some would dismiss such clear narrative through-lines as simplistic. In *The Player*, Michael Tolkin's brilliant novel on contemporary Hollywood, studio vice-president Griffin Mill refers to the mealy-mouthed, would be intellectuals as "civilians": "They didn't love the movies the way he did. They asked, 'Why does Hollywood make such awful movies, why must it pander to the lowest common denominator, why does it persist in making movies that demean us all?' They liked movies from Europe. They couldn't enjoy an American action movie, but let the Japanese copy a Western and they tripped over themselves adoring it. Creeps. Film buffs. Pear-shaped morons with their shirts buttoned to the collar, whining about the *cinema*". It has become the custom in the industry to out-intellectualise



Game plan: Mark Rylance as John Healy, moving from one addiction to another in 'The Grass Arena'

such whiners: movies have clear, linear, action-driven plots not because they are simple, but because they are *mythic*. Movie heroes are mythic heroes. Joseph Campbell said so.

In *The Grass Arena*, John Healy is far from mythic. He's a nasty, entirely ungratifying drunk whose blurred remarks and cack-handed actions embody no universal insights beyond the need to obtain another bottle. What is more, his alcoholism is never explained; he seems to drift into it. It's true that he has an overbearing, religious, Irish father, but as motivation this doesn't compare with that of Robin Williams' Holy Fool tramp, whose beautiful and brilliant young wife was blown apart in his arms by a resentful nut-case randomly shooting up a yuppie eatery (now there's a reason to drop out and take on the mantle of a latterday Parsifal). Never mind that Healy's decline is more 'truthful'; by eschewing cod psychology, *The Grass Arena* also eschews 'realism', because the aesthetic of movie realism demands that all actions by a central protagonist have a governing motivation.

Nevertheless, Healy is redeemed. The film, after all, is about a man who struggles to overcome his addiction, and struggle is reputedly what drama is all about. But what is the unlikely instrument of his redemption? He learns to play chess. Hardly the most photogenic of combats: there's not a lot to be done with two people staring at a board and thinking hard.

It's even difficult to know when Healy is winning, except from the expressions of his upper-class opponents when they realise they've been mated by an oik.

But the most radical aspect of *The Grass Arena* is Healy's realisation that his obsession with chess is as much a facet of his addictive personality as his dependence on drink. He comes to understand that if he is to attain any degree of freedom he must overcome obsession itself, not replace one of its manifestations, however socially sanctioned, with another.

The film ends not with this former bum rising to the ranks of the Grand Masters, but with his turning his back on the very means of his salvation – a resolution which for me embodies a deep psychological truth. But in movie terms, it's a non-starter, or rather a non-finisher. It's as if Rocky had told his trainer seconds before the big fight that all his compulsive training was not the means to self-discovery, but a childish way of avoiding confrontation with his own personal failings. Just think how let down an audience would feel. There's no room for inadequate quitters in the cinema: we might as well screen our home videos.

The conclusion that *The Grass Arena* is only a 'film' is inescapable; the comparison between it and *The Fisher King* makes crystal clear what industry experts mean when they call up the film/movie distinction. And there is one last difference: I really enjoyed *The Grass Arena*.

It's as if Rocky had told his trainer seconds before the big fight that all his compulsive training was not the means to self-discovery, but a childish way of avoiding confrontation with his own personal failings

Oedipus television

Charles Penwarden

A little while ago I saw on television a rather flimsy film about French cinephiles, *Travelling Avant*: a nostalgic evocation of the days when young people went to the cinema with a passion and founded film clubs, when *Cahiers du cinéma* invented *la nouvelle vague* and vice versa; in short, when film was important. It seemed appropriate to watch it on television.

More recently, on one of the cable channels, I saw Agnès Varda talking to a score of arts students about *Jacquot de Nantes*, her well-received tribute to Jacques Demy. The film had been on general release for several months, but sadly not one of the students had made the effort. "There's too much to see", they explained. No doubt they too will catch it when it comes round on the box.

It is a commonplace with media critics that what television ignores is consigned to non-existence. Jean Baudrillard has written whole books on the theme. In the case of French cinema, however, the idea would be just as valid if stood on its head. Too much attention from television is threatening cinema's existence: smothering it with admiring, possessive love.

True, people are always warning that the cinema is on its last legs. Every moderately ambitious feature that gets made is like a survivor snatched from the jaws of commercial indifference. Hence the controversy over Léos Carax's *Les Amants du Pont-Neuf*. Carax was determined to pursue his own ideas about cinema and was not afraid to spend money. *Les Amants* cost £10 million – five or even ten times the budget of your usual *film d'auteur* – and almost didn't get made. Some were tempted to see its relative commercial failure as punishment for the young director's hubris. Others saw it as part of the conspiracy against the artistic values of cinema.

The French film industry may look the healthiest in Europe, but recently published figures do not inspire confidence. Since 1981, its annual audiences have slumped from 175 million to 121 million. Worse, while American films are still attracting as many spectators as ten years ago, the share for French films has fallen from 100 million to 40 million.

The explanation may be simple. *La qualité française* has not lost its drawing power, it's just that people no longer need to be drawn. They can stay at home and watch television. Whereas in 1981 viewers were offered an all-public menu of three channels, today's couch *pomme de terre* must negotiate between two public channels, three commercial ones and Canal Plus, a pay channel specialising in film. Not to mention having access to the twenty or so cable channels, if the neighbourhood has been wired up.

There, amidst all the zappable junk, are a lot of worthwhile films. In fact Canal

Plus offers around ten a week, including two or three interesting French features. As director Yves Boisset puts it: "Canal Plus has killed the cinema, simply because people know they only have to wait six months or a year for a film to come round". To want to go out, you have to be really motivated – or else need to escape your family. Hence, no doubt, the success of directors like Luc Besson, whose films seem to encourage teenage bonding (best kept out of the sitting room).

But if French cinema may suffer from its marriage with television, the days are past when it could afford to live alone. Together with its sister networks, Canal Plus now represents the industry's biggest provider of funds – through both production and broadcasting deals. Theatrical takings account for less than a third. Television loves the prestige of film – *haute couture* to the chain store merchandise of its workaday programmes. And, as with fashion, it loves to get excited about cinema's big events: the Césars, France's brave imitation of the Oscars, is "une grande nuit de télévision". Cannes has presenters in a tizzy of cinephilia.

So much for the spectacle of it all. And cinema as a serious form? Well, as Godard recently said: "Cinema doesn't work on television... on television you just glimpse these images passing by quickly – in fact there isn't really an image to watch". Significantly, none of France's major networks at present offers a thoughtful programme about cinema. Apparently, these are not popular enough to fit with the increasingly commercial logic induced by the ratings war. Therefore they don't exist.

Meanwhile, television continues to colonise. A number of the police and detective series made directly as telefilms would certainly have been produced for cinema ten or fifteen years ago. More and more directors are working for the small screen, including such respected *auteurs* as Doillon, Chabrol and Godard. The question inevitably arises: is there a difference between a telefilm and a cinema film? The man at Canal Plus doesn't think so. And Boisset, who has made both, sees no real

Too much attention from television is threatening cinema's existence: smothering it with admiring, possessive love

difference in style (apart from the fact that television gave him a bigger budget). If such is the case, cinema can only continue to lose its aura.

Television is "occupied territory, and there's no *Ausweis*", said Godard recently, explaining his decision to take his *Allemagne Année 90 Neuf Zero*, a film commissioned for television, to the Venice festival. "I wanted the film to exist and have a passport like the others, since on television it wouldn't".

Godard's artistic intransigence, one suspects, is humoured only because he is part of the cultural furniture. Television wanted 'a piece of Godard'. However, when Jacques Rivette embarked on his film *La Belle noiseuse* with the backing of television, he found himself having to make two. The first, the full four hour version awarded the Grand Prix at Cannes, was shown in three Parisian cinemas and was followed some months later by *Divertimento*, the enfeebled two hour version destined for broadcast consumption. One wonders what would have happened to a director with a less established reputation.

Given such pressure from television, and the relative decline of the independent sector, it is hardly surprising that 100 French directors have signed a petition calling on the government to ensure that their films can be "seen properly". Seen and not just used, that is. There has been much talk recently about the degradation of French commercial television: its reality shows, soft porn and brainless consumerism. The theme was echoed several years ago in Chabrol's film *Masques*, which portrayed the ruthless venality lurking behind the syrupy persona of a game show host. It was given another, more subtle twist this winter in films by André Téchiné and Olivier Assayas.

The naive provincial hero of Téchiné's *J'Embrasse pas* is taken up by a homosexual TV personality (Philippe Noiret) wearied by the buffoonery of his profession. Having 'failed' to become an actor, the young man rejects the older man's offer of help and decides to go on the game: there, at least, he knows where he stands. The heroine of Assayas' *Paris s'éveille* lives with an older man who has contacts 'in the business'. While waiting for these to bear fruit, she sniffs coke, secretly poses for porn photographs and starts an affair with her lover's son. By the time this second affair ends, she has managed to sleep with some suitably uninspiring television celebrity and get a job as a weather presenter – a form of success eschewed by her marginal former lovers.

The first of those, incidentally, is played by Jean-Pierre Léaud, *acteur fétiche* of *la nouvelle vague*, the second by Thomas Langmann, son of the producer and director Claude Berri. As for Olivier Assayas, he used to write for *Cahiers du cinéma*. Symbolic, did you say?



'La Belle noiseuse': cut in half for its television version

Riding the tides

Peter Biskind

To judge by the lamentations and gnashing of teeth emanating from Burbank and Culver City, the Grinch stole Christmas. By late December, the trickle of red ink alluded to in this space two months ago had become a haemorrhage. It was widely reported that 1991 would be the worst year in recent memory, with box office receipts off by more than 7.4 per cent from 1990, down \$1.5 billion from 1989's industry high.

Even more dramatic, *Variety* predicted that ticket sales would fall below the one billion mark for the first time in fifteen years. By mid-December Orion had filed for bankruptcy, Carolco, despite producing the biggest hit of the year, is threatening to give up the ghost, and Fox, with a string of flops and trouble in the pipeline (*Shining Through*, *Jack the Bear*, *Aliens 3* and *Prelude to a Kiss*) is not having a great year. Two major cinema chains, Cineplex Odeon and AMC Entertainment, lost money in one or more quarters in 1991.

Industry analysts argue that sky-rocketing advertising costs have been the primary culprit and that higher ticket prices have forced audiences to consume television and video, from which the movie industry gets a smaller return than it does from theatrical exhibition. Whereas the studios get \$2.50c per movie ticket, they receive only between 10 and 60c per viewer in ancillary markets.

Historically, it is recognised that economic downturns enable corporations to cut fat, exert a downward pressure on salary scales, reduce budgets, break unions, and eliminate competition. Studio executive ranks, which ballooned over the past few years, are being shaved dramatically: Carolco lopped off fifty people from a staff of 200, and reports are that the cuts may have been even more severe. Contracts may become a thing of the past at Paramount except at the very top, and the length of Tri-Star's agreements with its execs has been slashed to less than two years, as opposed to three or four. The days when executives could expect to be routinely settled with a plush independent production deal are probably over.

Eliminating fat

Also in the middle of the Christmas season, 300-odd mid- and top-level executives at MCA were told not to expect any raises. Like Disney's, MCA's theme parks are taking a beating in the recession, and its motion picture division, Universal, without a holiday hit (save for *Cape Fear*) has seen its year-end market share shrink to 11 per cent. Rumour has it that it was Matsushita, MCA's parent company, not MCA itself, that ordered the freeze. Disney has sliced \$5 million off the average budgets of its movies, down to \$15 million.

All of the above is ironic, in light of the

fact that 1991 was not such a bad year after all. A 6 per cent surge in cinema attendance during the all-important Christmas week pushed the year's grosses up to 1990's level. In fact, Christmas week grosses broke the mark set by the first week of July 1989, the *Batman* summer. *Hook*, while not the megahit that many had hoped for, performed well, and was expected easily to surpass the \$100 million mark, as are *The Addams Family* and *Beauty and the Beast*, by 5 January.

And as if to demonstrate that Christmas week was no fluke, the first week of January was up 15 per cent from the same week in 1991. *Father of the Bride*, another Disney movie, performed strongly; *Prince of Tides* did well for Columbia; *JFK* and *The Last Boy Scout* pulled down respectable figures for Warner Bros; and *The Addams Family* and *Star Trek VI* performed well for Paramount. *Bugsy* opened to disappointing figures, but stunning reviews and strong word of mouth may still transform it into a hit. In fact, in the first week of January audience figures for *Bugsy* and *JFK* fell dramatically less than those for any of the other Christmas movies. All of which goes to show that movie-goers will still turn out for good movies.

The end of the year left Warners in first place, with a market share of 13.9 per cent, 0.2 per cent ahead of Disney. Paramount was in third place with a share

MCA's theme parks are taking a beating, and its motion picture division, Universal, without a holiday hit, has seen its market share shrink to 11 per cent. Rumour has it that it was Matsushita, not MCA itself, that ordered the freeze

of 12 per cent, Fox in fourth with 11.6 per cent, Universal in fifth with 11 per cent, Tri-Star in sixth with 10.9 per cent, and Columbia in seventh with 9.1 per cent. Corporately speaking, of course, Columbia and Tri-Star combine to give Sony Pictures Entertainment first place with a 20 per cent share.

Moreover, the home video market was strong throughout the year. Fourth quarter distributor sales to rental suppliers were up 32 per cent over 1990. (Buena Vista ruled the sell-through heap with a whopping 36 per cent share.)

Don't get me wrong: eliminating fat and waste isn't a bad thing, it's just that the rich will get richer and the poor will get poorer. And when it's all over, there will be fewer studios (remember MGM? remember UA?) and far fewer independents. The buyer's market of the 80s will become a seller's market in the 90s.

Climate of hysteria

An occupational hazard of the movie business is generalising about it – what works and what doesn't. And in a climate of hysteria, the generalisations get stranger and stranger. Recall the conclusions Paramount head Brandon Tartikoff drew from the failure of *Regarding Henry* and *Frankie and Johnny*: adult-oriented films don't perform; stars like Al Pacino and Michelle Pfeiffer aren't worth the salaries they're paid; no one wants to see Harrison Ford in a suit. On this slender basis, he sounded like he was ready to re-orient his whole production slate. Well, the truth is that neither of these movies is *Citizen Kane*, and *Frankie and Johnny* in particular had nowhere to go after the first ten minutes. Arnold and Julia couldn't have saved it.

Then, when Fox's *For the Boys* flopped badly, everyone was saying that period pictures don't play, that Bette Midler is finished, that there is no audience for women's pictures – female movie-goers, remember, were the big discovery of last year, when action pictures flopped and *Ghost* and *Pretty Woman* went through the roof. That is, until *Prince of Tides* cleaned up a few weeks later. In a less panicky period, executives might have looked harder at *For the Boys* and noticed that it is two hours plus in length, that it is a love story without a love affair, and that Bette Midler doesn't do very much of what her fans want: sing.

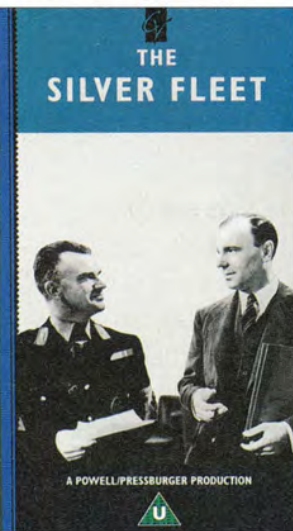
Hollywood analysts are too quick to assume each movie is a perfect example of its kind, and ignore factors like timing. Right now, for example, execs are rifling through TV Guides to plunder sitcoms of the 60s, on the basis of the success of *The Addams Family*. But after the next three vintage sitcom-derived movies flop, they may come round to what was clear all the time: one of the main reasons *The Addams Family* did well was because it was released over a holiday and had virtually no competition.



Sitting pretty: Barbra Streisand and Nick Nolte in 'Prince of Tides'

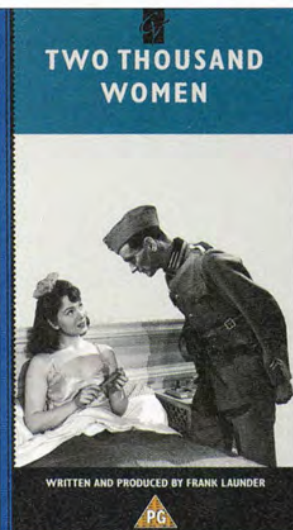
Classic Nostalgia

January releases from Connoisseur Video Connoisseur have a wide and interesting schedule for '92, and the New Year starts with four classic examples of British film making from the 30's and 40's.



Michael Powell's *Red Ensign*, produced in 1934, depicts the struggle to create a British ship-building industry in the depth of the depression. It can also be read as a plea for a strong British film industry, reflecting Powell's lifelong commitment.

The Silver Fleet, produced by Powell/Pressburger and directed by Vernon Sewell in 1943, is a good example of their prolific wartime output. Starring Ralph Richardson, no British film has more affecting portrayals of anti-Nazi Europeans, or more chilling ones of their Nazi occupiers.

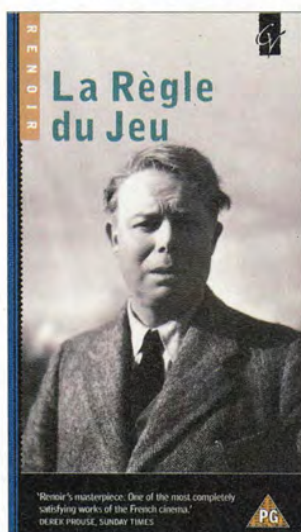


On a slightly lighter note, Connoisseur present two excellent examples of Frank Launder's work. Together with Sidney Gilliat, he directed and produced *I See a Dark Stranger*. Deborah Kerr and Trevor Howard star in this entertaining thriller, amidst the shadowy world of German espionage in wartime Britain.

Two Thousand Women, written and produced by Launder in 1944, is pure jingoistic wartime entertainment set in a French internment camp for British women. A distinguished cast, including Flora Robson, make this a real gem.

Full catalogue information can be obtained from the address opposite, and credit card bookings can be taken on 081 399 0022

Forthcoming Releases In February, Connoisseur will be releasing two landmark films from French Cinema



Jean Renoir's *La Règle du Jeu* has had a chequered history, having been condemned, re-cut and finally banned at the time of its initial release. Now recognised as a masterpiece, it demonstrates Renoir's vision, his technical skill, his ability to draw outstanding performances from his cast and indeed to put in a fine performance himself (as Octave). Described by Derek Prouse of the Sunday Times as 'One of the most completely satisfying works of the French cinema,' it is a pleasure for Connoisseur to be able to offer it to the video buying public.

Almost thirty years after Renoir's journey into the Absurd, Jean-Luc Godard was making waves of a different sort. With *2 or 3 choses que je sais d'elle* – a work described by Richard Roud as 'The summit of Godard's work.' – he combined sociological discourse and improvisational film making to overpowering effect. Godard asked 'Is this cinema?', to which the answer must be a resounding 'Yes!'

Both titles will be available mid-February at the mail-order price of £14.99 each plus £1.50 postage and packing for the first tape and an additional 50p for each additional tape

CONNOISSEUR VIDEO/ SIGHT AND SOUND READERS' OFFER

Dark Eyes

£9.99

Mastroianni picked up the award for Best Actor at Cannes in 1987 for his performance in this wonderful adaption of the Chekov short story 'The Lady and the Little Dog'.

Directed by Nikita Mikhalkov, the film tells a storyteller's story, as the complicated love life of Romano unfurls on screen. Packed with unforgettable images – the famous mud bath set to *The Blue Danube*, Romano clutching his 'unbreakable' glass – the film also has a denouement, in the final frames, which will bring a tear to the eye of the most hardened cinemagoer.

Available on video since mid-1991, Connoisseur Video are happy to be able to offer the video to Sight and Sound readers at the special discount price of £9.99, plus £1.50 p&p.



I enclose my cheque made payable to Connoisseur Video Limited, or charge my credit card for the total value of £11.49

☐ Visa ☐ Access (Tick circle)

Card number

Expiry date

Name

Address

Signature

Delivery address if different from above

Name

Address

Please cut (or photocopy) the entire coupon and send to: Mail Order Offer, Connoisseur Video Limited, Glenbuck House, Glenbuck Road, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 6BT

Registered in England Number 246 3593
Please allow 28 days for delivery
Prices are inclusive of VAT. VAT no. 448 8580 02

Wildly baroque and movie-literate, Scorsese's remake of 'Cape Fear' reminds us why we should cherish the director, argues J. Hoberman

Sacred and profane



● The young Jean-Luc Godard wrote of Nicholas Ray that if the cinema no longer existed, Ray alone would be capable of inventing it – and, what's more, of wanting to. Looking at the roster of current American directors, the same might be said (and often is) of Martin Scorsese. Steven Spielberg has made more money, Woody Allen has received more accolades, Oliver Stone (a former student) has reaped bigger headlines – but nobody has made better movies. Scorsese is Hollywood's designated maestro: the most celluloid-obsessed and single-minded film-maker in Hollywood, the one American director that Spike Lee would deign to admire.

Although *Taxi Driver* and the title song from *New York, New York* are the only Scorsese artefacts to embed themselves in American mainstream consciousness (a television series based on *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore* barely lasted one season), Scorsese has never lacked for critical support. *Mean Streets* was the most highly praised debut of the 70s; *Raging Bull* topped several polls as the best American movie of the 80s; *GoodFellas* received virtually every critics' award in 1990. Even his so-called flops – the brilliant *King of Comedy*, engaging *After Hours*, and heartfelt *Last Temptation of Christ* – have had their defenders.

Perhaps hoping to repay Universal for bankrolling his magnificent obsession, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, Scorsese has entered into an exclusive six-year directing and producing deal with the studio and succumbed, at last, to remakitis. With his edgily overwrought *Cape Fear* remake, he has concocted an admittedly

commercial thriller more skilful than inspired and at least as cerebral as it is gut-twisting.

The first *Cape Fear* (1961, released by Universal-International) was knocked off by British director J. Lee Thompson between the martial epics *Guns of Navarone* and *Taras Bulba*. The hero, Sam Bowden (Gregory Peck), was an upstanding Georgia prosecutor who, some years before, had testified against one Max Cady (Robert Mitchum) in a particularly vicious rape case. The plot thickens when Cady, having served his time, comes looking for revenge, presumably to be inflicted on Bowden's wife and daughter.

Undeniably disturbing (the original trailers promised movie-goers that they were going to "Feel Fear!"), Thompson's movie derived much of its frisson from Cady's antisocial assault on the good-good culture of the 50s. With the judicious Peck seemingly preparing for his Oscar-laureate role as the saintly Southern lawyer in Universal's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which opened six months later, and his wife and daughter (TV personalities Polly Bergen and Lori Martin) so sitcom wholesome, one might well sympathise with the villain – at least at first.

The heavy, deceptively somnolent Mitchum – an action star with a hipster edge, having been busted for pot in the late 40s – brought a brute physicality and unprecedented sexual sadism to his characterisation. Barry Gifford, who would later pay homage to *Cape Fear* by incorporating its eponymous location in his meta-noir novel *Wild at Heart*, calls Mitchum "the angel of death-with-pain, put on earth to give men pause". But although *Cape Fear* is as much horror film as thriller – with Mitchum's

virtually unkillable monster anticipating the slashers of the late 70s – there is another, equally disturbing subtext lurking in the film.

Cady wants to spook Bowden before he destroys him, and for much of the movie he is protected by the very law he places himself beyond. Set in the South and released at the height of the struggle for desegregation, *Cape Fear* conjures up the bogie of a terrifying rapist – albeit white – who proved inconveniently conversant with his "civil rights". In its nightmarish way, *Cape Fear* managed to suggest both what terrified the white South and the terror the white South itself inspired. "You won't forget this movie", Gifford ends his critique, "especially if you're a Yankee Jew".

In general, *Cape Fear* was received with trepidation. The film's British opening was delayed until early 1963, while Thompson and Lord Morrison, president of the British Board of Censors, argued over cuts. (The movie was eventually released with six minutes trimmed.) Calling it "a nasty film", Lord Morrison objected to the sexual threat Mitchum posed to Lori Martin. Nor was the British censor alone. Pit in *Variety*, Dwight Macdonald in *Esquire* and Bosley Crowther in the *New York Times* all warned readers against bringing their children, Crowther adding that *Cape Fear* was "one of those shockers that provoke disgust and regret".

Of course, disgust and regret are scarcely emotions to make Martin Scorsese flinch. ►

Return of the repressed: De Niro as Cady, an avenging angel from hell and a relative of Travis from 'Taxi Driver', top; De Niro taking his revenge on the uptight Nolte, right



◀ and he would doubtless endorse the sense the 1962 movie left that civilisation's veneer is somewhat less sturdy than the shell of an egg.

Scorsese's *Cape Fear* opens with the camera rising from the depths of the primordial swamp where all the protagonists will ultimately swim. Although the ensuing sense of beleaguered middle-class territoriality is as strong as ever, the new *Cape Fear* complicates the moral equation by shifting focus from Max Cady, flamboyantly played by Robert De Niro, to the Bowden family. In this *Cape Fear*, the Bowdens' lives are built on quicksand. Scorsese undermines their solidarity, wipes his hands on their reputations, sullies their laundry with a miasma of guilt.

Not simply a concerned citizen, the new Sam Bowden turns out to have been Cady's public defender against a particularly brutal charge of rape, who buried evidence of the victim's promiscuity so as not to jeopardise his client's conviction. The self-righteousness inherent in sensitive Peck has here coalesced into uptight Nick Nolte – a man built to absorb punishment, even as his menacing bulk suggests Mitchum's. As his wife Leigh (renamed for Janet?), Jessica Lange looks just as classy as precursor Polly Bergen, but she's considerably more bitter and a lot less supportive. Their teenage daughter Danielle, played by Juliette Lewis, is ripe and dishevelled, braces gleaming out of her unformed face. (Does Marty know how to pick them? Not long after *Cape Fear*'s US release Lewis replaced Emily Lloyd as the nymphet in Woody Allen's current project.)

Whereas in 1962 evil stalked the Bowden family from without, the threat is now to be found within. They are, as current parlance would have it, *dysfunctional*. Leigh not irrationally suspects Sam of having an affair; to block out their screaming, Danielle – who is recovering, it is suggested, from a precocious drug problem – locks herself in her bedroom, flicks on both MTV and the radio and begins compulsively dialling her Swatch phone, as instinctive an ostrich as the rest of her clan. Meanwhile, his release from prison heralded by a drumroll of thunder, Cady is the return of Bowden's repressed – telling him later that while the judge and DA “were just doing their jobs”, Bowden betrayed his trust.

Even more than in the original, it's difficult not to feel a sneaking sympathy for Cady, particularly when the more physically imposing Bowden is trying to buy him off, or, later, hiring goons to run him out of town. This Cady is less the snake in the Bowden family Eden and more the projection of their unconscious fears. Indeed, he first appears to them in precisely that fashion. Shuffling into a movie house (showing the horror comedy *Problem Child*), Cady positions himself directly in front of the family, blocks the screen and, brandishing his cigar while laughing like a hyena, subjects them to what must be the film buff's ultimate violation. “Dad, you should have just punched him out”, Lewis admonishes Nolte, unaware that they've just encountered implacable evil.

Cross played across his back, religious man-



Crime and punishment: De Niro, with Jessica Lange, before he rapes her

tras inscribed on his arms, De Niro's Cady is a self-taught psychopath and a refugee from Kafka's penal colony, as much a mythological beast as any unicorn or yeti. Although it's tempting to read his character as Scorsese's revenge on the Christian fundamentalists who attacked *The Last Temptation of Christ*, it's difficult to conceptualise the sort of born-again Baptist who would pray to Jesus beneath a Stalin pin-up and augment the scriptures with a combination of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and Henry Miller. A two-bit De Sade with delusions of grandeur, Cady sees himself as avenging angel. By opening the family up to his blandishments, *Cape Fear* has perverse intimations of *Teorema* as well as *Straw Dogs*.

Johnny Boy and Travis Bickle, Jake La Motta and Rupert Pupkin have nothing on this nut. With his long black hair slicked back under a white yachting cap, mouth wrapped around the world's biggest cigar butt, and torso draped in a flaming Aloha shirt, De Niro is a cracker from hell. The conception is wildly baroque, and most of the time De Niro's Cady is more

crazy than menacing. Although his tattooed slogans and religious rants evoke Mitchum's career performance as the psychotic preacher in *Night of the Hunter*, De Niro lacks Mitchum's insolent ease as a performer. His Max Cady is a riff and, half camping on his Southern drawl, he never lets you forget it.

The movie, too, is knowing without seeming felt. The rough sex here looks a lot rougher than it did in the original, but is actually less visceral. Where Mitchum cracks an egg on one of his victims, De Niro (like Dracula) takes a bite out of a woman's face. More overt too is the suggestion, repeated in various contexts throughout the film, that when a rape is reported, it is actually the victim who goes on trial. (Note: Even though *Cape Fear* opened the very day the American public was transfixed by allegations of sexual harassment and achieved box office saturation during the William Kennedy Smith rape trial, the operative movie metaphor for such cases remained *Fatal Attraction*. *Cape Fear*'s critique is softened by the use of the daughter's voiceover to frame the movie – the

entire nightmare can thus be read as the hysterical fantasy of a teenage girl.)

In the movie's most daring set piece, De Niro makes a call to Lewis in the guise of her new drama coach (one more instance of subtext overwhelming narrative). The stunt nature of this self-reflexive turn is literalised by having the actor chat on the phone and even cue records while dangling upside down on his chinning bar (eventually the camera flips over as well). It's followed by another hot-dog scene in which, having lured Lewis down into her high school's basement and on to the stage where a play is to be rehearsed, De Niro seems determined to out-creep Willem Dafoe's 'seduction' of Laura Dern in *Wild at Heart*. This fairy-tale sequence in the make-believe gingerbread house ("I'm the Big Bad Wolf", De Niro begins) has received near-universal acclaim. What's far more effective, however, is Nolte's subsequent rage at the nubile daughter with whom he can never quite make eye contact. "Did he touch you? Wipe that smile off your face!" he screams when he discovers what happened. It's an indignity Gregory Peck never had to suffer – the autumn of the patriarch.

Does it sound as if *Cape Fear* is overdirected? The movie is undeniably gripping and it certainly looks great. Shot by Freddie Francis, director of the Hammer horror flicks beloved by Scorsese in his youth, it's a heady succession of extreme close-ups and artful reflections, luridly shimmering sunsets lit by flickers of heat lightning. If an unknown had signed *Cape Fear*, it would have been heralded as an impressive debut. (Consider the delirious overpraise that greeted *Dead Again*.) But Scorsese is no twenty-five-year-old retooling antique genres, and more than one observer has attributed *Cape Fear*'s manic formalism to the director's alienation from the material (a similar hyperkinetic frenzy is evident in his last commercial assignment, the 1986 *The Color of Money*).

Scorsese's relationship to *Cape Fear* is, however, more self-conscious and complex. No less than Godard, Scorsese is prodigiously movie-literate. His VCRs work overtime, he employs a full-time film archivist, spends thousands on prints, and has supervised the restoration and re-release of movies as varied as *Peeping Tom*, *Once Upon a Time in the West* and *Le Carrosse d'or*. His grasp of film history far exceeds that of most American critics and is far too sophisticated for him to attempt anything so crude as an unselfconscious remake – let alone a heedless obliteration of the original version. If anything, the new *Cape Fear* assumes that the viewer has seen the earlier one, perhaps even as recently as Scorsese himself.

In effect, Scorsese has taken a piece of hack work and, like the archetypal *auteur*, filled it with his own directorial touches and perhaps subversive notions of guilt and redemption. Douglas Sirk is quoted in the film. As the *Nation*'s Stuart Klawans observed in his suitably ambivalent review, "History robbed Scorsese of the chance to be an *auteur* in the full, oppositional sense of the term. So now, as compensation, he's gone back thirty years and inserted

Cross played across his back, De Niro's Cady is a refugee from Kafka's penal colony

himself into a studio product, *Cape Fear*, giving it the one thing it lacked in 1962 – a star performance by the director".

The new *Cape Fear* oscillates between a critique of the original and a variation on a common text: it's a choreographed hall-of-mirrors, an orchestrated echo chamber. The first version resonates throughout the second – often literally. Elmer Bernstein stridently reworks the original Bernard Herrmann score. An aged Robert Mitchum appears as the local chief of police, and his deep drawl, first heard over the telephone, haunts the movie. Martin Balsam, who played the police chief in the 1962 version, has here been promoted to judge.

Scorsese's witty casting includes using the archetypal Southern vigilante, star of *Walking Tall*, Joe Don Baker, as a sleazy private eye whose idea of a mixed drink is Pepto-Bismol laced with Jim Beam. But the film's vertiginous sense of inversion is completed by the appearance of Gregory Peck as the enthusiastically slippery criminal lawyer who represents De Niro's smirking Cady. (It's as if Peck has become what he beheld.) Scorsese's remake thus contains its own negative image – a trope that's more than once utilised in the cinematography. *Cape Fear*'s tumultuous climax – a *tour de force* for De Niro, Scorsese, and mainly editor Thelma Schoonmaker – completes the role reversals by putting the lawyer Nolte on trial, even while the boat of civilisation spins out of control and cracks up on the rocks.

Although De Niro's final scene is as powerfully crafted an exit as that actor has ever made, the movie – like his performance – is a good deal more spectacular than terrifying.



Angel of death: Mitchum in the original movie

and somewhat less than the sum of its parts. Blood is not an abstraction; De Niro is. (I never thought I'd say this, but what *Cape Fear* needs is a shot of Paul Schrader – Cady's particular nexus of evangelical fervour, sexual guilt, and class resentment is more alluded to than fleshed out.) Like the villain, the location lacks specificity: it's a curiously all-white South.

Budgeted at \$34 million, *Cape Fear* is Scorsese's most expensive movie, and his first commissioned project since *The Color of Money*. The project originated with Steven Spielberg, who interested De Niro in playing Cady, who then persuaded Scorsese to undertake a commercial thriller. And indeed, *Cape Fear* is structurally quite similar to Spielberg's *Hook*. A careerist father's failure to spend quality time with his children brings down a baroque threat to the family that can only be defeated by the father's capacity for regression. The difference is that *Hook* is filmically more impoverished, but psychologically far richer.

That absence of pathology seems to have left Scorsese with a guilty conscience. "I think a lot of the pictures I've made are good", he recently told *Premiere*. "But they're not *The Searchers*. They're not *8½*. *The Red Shoes*. *The Leopard*".

Although it's a disservice to consider *Cape Fear* more than middling Scorsese, the film has received near-universal raves. The major exception is *New Yorker* critic Terence Rafferty, who, no less hysterical than those who hailed *Cape Fear* a masterpiece, termed the film "a disgrace... ugly, incoherent, dishonest". Rafferty echoes the original's reviews – including the brief mention that appeared in the *New Yorker* back in 1962: "Everyone concerned with this repellent attempt to make a great deal of money out of a clumsy plunge into sexual pathology should be thoroughly ashamed of himself". And money has been made. *Cape Fear*, which seems headed for a \$70 million domestic gross, needed barely six weeks to surpass *The Color of Money* as Scorsese's most financially successful film. (His reassuringly outré follow-up project is an adaptation of Edith Wharton's novel, *The Age of Innocence*.)

Directors are manipulative by definition, but I've never met a film-maker more adept at enlisting critical sympathy than Scorsese. "For Scorsese, there's no such thing as a throw-away", Peter Biskind wrote in *Premiere*. "He couldn't sell out if he wanted to", enthused Richard Corliss in *Time*. Their characterisations are not exaggerated; neither is their support unwarranted. Other directors wax self-servingly sentimental about the art of the movies; Scorsese repeatedly pledges allegiance, spending time and money on the job of preservation.

In extolling Nicholas Ray, Godard was reviewing his less than epochal *Hot Blood* – "a semi-successful film to the extent that Ray was semi-uninterested in it". *Cape Fear* is a similar sort of semiotext. More than a critic's darling, Scorsese is a national treasure – the only director in Hollywood whose devotion to cinema justifies everyone's notions of popular art. We need him. He needs a hit. *Cape Fear* is a semi-sacrifice to that faith.

Novelist of 'Nothing Natural', Jenny Diski, watches a video of the first 'Cape Fear' and the Scorsese remake – and compares them

The shadow within

What will the kids say of our time, when in thirty years from now they see Scorsese's new version of *Cape Fear*? Perhaps, that although we understood the complexity of things, and the relativity of good and evil, we had no knowledge of the satisfactions to be had from the battle between light and dark on a human scale.

The original version of *Cape Fear* is pure film noir, one of those stories we tell ourselves on dark winter nights. It shows decent values under threat. The Bowden family is untouched by suffering, and as nice as the apple pie Peg Bowden undoubtedly makes for Sam and their cutely precocious daughter, Nancy. They're wealthy, though not outrageously so, and they're happy together in a simple, enviable way that's as remote from passion as it is from divorce. There are no doubts and no clouds in the lives of the Bowdens until Robert Mitchum, barrel-chested, heavy-lidded and *bad*, takes the keys out of amiable, dull, puppet-wooden Gre-

gory Peck's ignition and reminds him who he is. It's simple. You know where you are; the bad guy's come along, and the family – *The Family* – is under threat.

Cady's threat is sexual. He's after Bowden through his wife and daughter, and the film makes it clear he's a sadistic psychopath. He attacks a woman he's picked up, and we hear from his own lips that he abducted and assaulted the wife who divorced him while he was in prison. What he does to them is literally *unspeakable*. No detail is shown or said, it is all shadow and implication, but we are allowed to suspect the worst our imaginations can come up with. What is stated, however, is that Cady is an 'animal' with a grudge. We have to fear the worst for the Bowdens, but the fear is not about death, it's about defilement.

The problem, watching the movie thirty years on, is: what side are you on? There's good and bad lined up against each other for a classic confrontation, and shouldn't I be rooting for the insufferably smug Bowdens? Is it the effect of the passing years that makes me cheer on chaos, or is there fault in the balance of the original film that allowed only *models* of good and evil on to the public screen? Think of the hallucinatory *Night of the Hunter*, made not long before, when Mitchum's evil met with a more interesting mix of flawed, weird, but determined humanity. See that film even now, and you don't feel you're in a moral time warp; there's no doubt whose side you're on.

So, roll on thirty or so years, and what does Martin Scorsese, make of *Cape Fear*? Scorsese

doesn't hide his intertextuality under a bushel. Mitchum is there, and so is Peck, in cameo parts that reverse their moral positions in the first movie, and neither of them resists a hammy wink at the way things have turned out this time. Scorsese has some fun (his Cady drinks nothing but Evian water throughout the film), but he's a moral investigator, and three decades later things have changed on a grand scale.

Robert De Niro takes the part of Cady and turns Mitchum's single-mindedness into a diabolical obsession. He is covered in biblical tattoos that warn of time and vengeance. The sexual danger is accompanied now by religious vehemence. He has become a man of learning as well as a man of iron. Body and mind are dedicated to revenge for the loss of his freedom. Scorsese and De Niro have cranked Cady up to the final notch of power and threat.

But for all De Niro's sinister presence, it is the nature of his victims that has altered most interestingly. Bowden is no longer the man who put Cady behind bars. This time, Sam was Cady's defence attorney. His crime, in Cady's eyes, was that he buried evidence proving Cady's sixteen-year-old victim was promiscuous. Cady might have got off, or got half the sentence. Bowden deliberately betrayed his oath as a lawyer in order to get a man he knew to be an "animal" off the streets.

Here, we're in a debate about natural justice versus constitutional rights, and the simple good against bad tale of the earlier film has almost disappeared. We know that the right to

Filmography

Martin Scorsese

born 17 November 1942, Flushing, NY

What's a Nice Girl Like You Doing in a Place Like This? 9 mins (1963)

It's Not Just You, Murray! 15 mins (1964)

The Big Shave 6 mins (1967)

Who's That Knocking at My Door? 90 mins (1969)

"We started in 1965, when I tried to make it as my graduate film at NYU. There was no real graduate department at the time, just myself, Mike Wadleigh and a few others who started this film... We were overambitious, until we found that we couldn't move the camera and get the angles that we wanted. However, it was accurate about the way we were when nothing was going on, just sitting or driving around. On one level, that's what the film was about; on another it was about sexual hang-ups and the Church".

Street Scenes 1970 75 mins (1970)

Boxcar Bertha 88 mins (1972)

"Boxcar Bertha belonged to a new genre, begun by 'Bonnie and Clyde', which I think had a regular audience at the time. The genre has gone now because exploitation has moved into 'slasher' films like 'Halloween' and 'Friday the 13th', which are more gory. 'Bonnie and Clyde' had incredible



Taxi Driver

violence in it, as did 'Boxcar Bertha'".

Mean Streets 110 mins (1973)

"While we were in the Lower East Side, a slate would come up saying 'Mean Streets', and people would get angry and say, 'There's nothing wrong with these streets!' And I'd say, 'No, it's only a preliminary title', and I kept on hoping to change it, but it turned out to be known as that. At the same time as giving this accurate picture of Italian-Americans, I was trying to make a kind of homage to the Warner Brothers gangster films".

Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore 112 mins (1974)

"Another important idea on 'Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore' was to use women in the crew – Sandy Weintraub was associate producer, Toby Rafelson our art director and Maria Lucas my editor – to help us be as honest as

possible. But we never intended it to be a feminist tract. It was a film about self-responsibility and how people make the same mistakes again and again".

Italianamerican 45 mins (1974)

Taxi Driver 114 mins (1975)

"Much of 'Taxi Driver' arose from my feeling that movies are really a kind of dream-state, or like taking dope. And the shock of walking out of the theatre into daylight can be terrifying. I watch movies all the time and I am also very bad at waking up. The film was like that for me – that sense of being almost awake.

New York, New York original release 138 mins, re-release 153 mins (1977)

"After winning the Cannes Golden Palm for 'Taxi Driver', we got big heads and felt that no script was good enough. For example we shot for weeks on the opening scene where De Niro picks up

Liza Minnelli, and the original cut of this alone ran one hour".

The Last Waltz 117 mins (1978)

American Boy 55 mins (1978)

Raging Bull 129 mins (1980)

"I was fascinated by the self-destructive side of Jake La Motta's character, his very basic emotions. What could be more basic than making a living by hitting another person on the head until one of you falls or stops?

"I put everything I knew and felt into that film and I thought it would be the end of my career. It was what I call a kamikaze way of making movies: pour everything in, then forget all about it and go find another way of life.

"I always find the antagonist more interesting than the protagonist in drama, the villain more interesting than the good guy. Then there's what I guess is a decidedly Christian point of view: 'who are we to judge, to point out the speck in our brother's eye, while we have a beam in our own eye?'"

The King of Comedy 109 mins (1982)

"People in America were confused by 'The King of Comedy' and saw Bob as some kind of mannequin. 'The King of Comedy' was right on the edge for us: we couldn't go any further at that time".

After Hours 97 mins (1985)

"After Hours' is to some extent a parody of Hitchcock's style. Over the years his films have become more emotionally meaningful for me. By the time I realised

an adequate defence is a fundamental of civilisation; we also know that Cady is too violent and vicious a creature to be allowed to roam free. We are implicated in a moral confusion at the heart of the movie, and Bowden is no longer simply a good man upon whom evil is unjustly unleashed. He is a much more modern hero, with a burden of ethical guilt. He faces not only violent retribution, but disbarment by his peers.

Cady's sexual threat has been brought up to date, too. De Niro's Cady is a man of our times, a post-Freudian laden with psycho-sexual knowledge. In the original film, Mitchum terrifies Bowden's daughter in her empty school; we see her running away in panic while a male torso stalks her. The child is almost run over in her desperate attempt to escape. But De Niro doesn't trap Bowden's daughter (who is now fifteen), he entices her. In the deserted school theatre, set for a production of *Little Red Riding Hood*, he offers her sympathy for the troubles and unfairness of a teenager's life – and a joint. He knows how misunderstood she is, how unhappy she feels at home; he's the "Do Right Man", he tells her, moving closer, and he's on her side. In a scene that's more disturbing than all the violence to come, he plays delicately with the girl's confused, emergent sexuality. He holds her gently (while we hold our breath) and penetrates only her lips with his thumb, getting a tremulous mix of childlike trust and sexual excitement that makes the adolescent much more than physically vulnerable. Cady's sexual threat is all the more *unspeak-*

able thirty years on because its range is so much greater, encompassing the mind and heart as well as the body.

The underlying theme of both versions of *Cape Fear* is the brittleness of civilised values. We come to see that Bowden's rock-solid sense of lawful, civilised behaviour is no more than a veneer. Just a little chipping away, and the niceness and righteousness break apart, and then it's down to a Hobbesian reality of kill or be killed. Civilisation is tested and must fail, that is the tragic centre of both movies, but while in the first film we observe the process of breakdown, in Scorsese's version it's clear that the cracks had appeared long before Cady arrived.

In the 1991 version, Bowden's wife, a fidgety, sexually and emotionally unhappy woman, sees the inevitability of the test ahead of them. Before the final chaos comes down she tells Bowden, with curious acceptance, that she'd often wondered how strong or weak they really were, and that they have to go through the hell that Cady will make in order to find out. Thirty years earlier, there were no questions to be answered, no uncertainties, only inexplicable forces that attacked from outside. Since then, it seems we've learned that bad things are often shadows of ourselves.

But when judgment day comes in the remake, it's wildly over the top. The swamp and storm of the earlier film become the watery ninth circle of hell, swirling and engulfing all the human participants. If Mitchum was hard to kill, De Niro is immortal. He becomes the avenging Angel, the Devil, the speaker in

Tongues, the undead, that we all fear. Or, perhaps, so alienating and hysterical is the end, he just becomes Freddy, late of Elm Street. Disfigured, manacled, drowned, crushed, Cady keeps on popping up to remind us he'll see us in our dreams.

Scorsese's *Cape Fear* comes, finally, more to resemble *Poltergeist* or all those *Damians*. The battle of the old black and white movies between good and bad on the small, but essentially human scale is lost. When De Niro becomes impossibly inhuman we lose the benefits of both the old simplicity and the new complexity. The family fights back against the chaos, but the force that threatens them is so monstrous that there is no moral satisfaction when they overcome it. Their triumph is arbitrary, not a result of having learned something.

It seems that as we have come to understand the flaws that run through all of us, so that good and bad are forever more or less relative terms, we have lost our belief in judgment. We know we have our faults, but the monsters out there waiting to get us belong on the big screen, shadow creatures of tricky camerawork. The more impossible they become, the less they have to do with us. De Niro might quote Dante to invoke the Inferno as his rightful home, but in the end it's clear he really resides on Elm Street – and none of us lives there. *Cape Fear* is still one of those stories we tell ourselves on dark winter nights, but these days we come out laughing.

The original version of 'Cape Fear' has recently been re-released by CIC video

he was moving the camera, it was over and I had felt the effect of the movement emotionally and intellectually. So if you take the scene in 'After Hours' when Paul is running with the invitation in his hand – there's a shot of a hand with the ground below – basically this refers back to the moment in 'Marnie' where she's holding the gun and going to shoot the horse".

The Color of Money 119 mins (1986)
"Since 'The Color of Money' was going to be a commercial movie, in America today you have to make a tie-in album. These days every damn movie in America is using recorded music like Jerry Lee Lewis, The Ronettes and all those people I grew up with as nostalgic soundtracks. So, to go a different way, I said, 'Why don't we shape the movie first, and then get the artists we like?'".

The Last Temptation of Christ 163 mins (1988)
"Throughout 1983 I rewrote Paul's script, as I'd done on 'Raging Bull', with

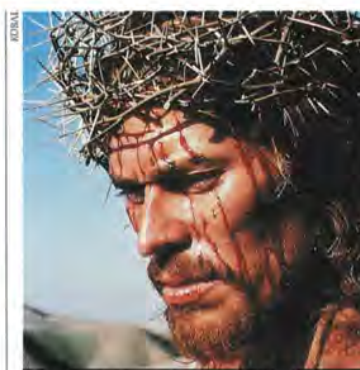
his permission and on the understanding I'd take no credit. I mentioned this to Jay Cocks and he said he'd help me, though he knew he'd get no credit either. Out of three major sessions we produced, I think, six drafts. Some of the best lines for me are those from the book that Paul originally included, such as, 'If I was a fire I'd burn, if I was a woodcutter I'd cut out my heart and lungs'; and towards the end when the angel turns to Christ and says, 'Are you satisfied?' and He replies, 'I feel ashamed when I think about it, all the mistakes I made, all the wrong ways I looked for God'".

Made in Milan 27 mins (1989)

New York Stories: Life Lessons 44 mins (1989)

GoodFellas 145 mins (1990)
"Everything was pretty much storyboarded, if not on paper, in notes. These days I don't actually draw a picture. But I usually put notes on the sides of the script, how the camera should move. I wanted lots of movement and I wanted it to be throughout the whole picture, and I wanted the style to kind of break down by the end, so that by his last day as a wiseguy, it's as if the whole picture would be out of control, give the impression he's just going to spin off the edge and fly out. And then stop for the last reel and a half.

"The idea was to get as much movement as possible – even more than



The Last Temptation of Christ

usual. And a very speeded, frenetic quality to most of it in terms of getting as much information to the audience – overwhelming them, I had hoped – with images and information. There's a lot of stuff in the frames. Because it's so rich. The lifestyle is so rich – I have a love-hate thing with that lifestyle".

Cape Fear (1991)

"One of the things that convinced me to do it was that Bob was so excited about the character of Max Cady and what we could do with it. We hadn't worked together like this in a long time – 'GoodFellas' was really just a cameo for him; it wasn't like we were on the set every day, working it out, the way we did when we had a key character like Travis Bickle or Jake La Motta or Rupert Pupkin. But on 'Cape Fear', Bob was like, 'We can do this and we could try that

and we could make it get crazy here and we can make it wilder there'. Forgive me, because with Bob and I, it's more about feelings and emotions than words. And that's the way the whole picture was finally written.

"The one similarity [between Max and Travis in 'Taxi Driver'] I see may be in the idea of a biblical purging of the world – in this case, the family. But we don't go round the set, saying, 'OK, now here's the biblical purging scene'. We're really very inarticulate people. That may show in a lot of our pictures, I'm afraid!"

Other directing work:

Mirror, Mirror 24 mins (1985)

Episode in 'Amazing Stories' TV series

Bad 16 mins (1987)

Promo for Michael Jackson

Somewhere Down the Crazy River 4.5 mins (1988)

Promo for Robbie Robertson

Armani Commercial 30 secs (1986)

Armani Commercial 20 secs (1988)

With the exception of the material on 'GoodFellas' and 'Cape Fear' all the statements are gathered together in 'Scorsese on Scorsese' edited by David Thompson and Ian Christie (Faber and Faber) which is a special subscription offer with Sight and Sound. Scorsese's comment on 'GoodFellas' is taken from 'Film Comment' (September/October 1990); on 'Cape Fear' from 'Interview' (November 1991).



The King of Comedy



Miracles, a maker of prosthetic legs and a painter are mixed in Raúl Ruiz's new film being shot on location in Portugal. Jonathan Romney visits the set

Hall of mirrors

Tucked away at the foot of the Castelo São Jorge, which stands on a hill overlooking Lisbon, is the Palacio de Pradique. This eighteenth-century ducal residence is of Tardis-like proportions, seemingly compact and austere from the outside, but inside yielding a baroque proliferation of corridors and staircases. The further you explore, the further they unfold, or fold in on themselves, leading you to deserted attic rooms and wind-blasted patios, to glaucous-lit, disused bathrooms and padlocked doors.

The palace could have been built expressly to accommodate the Chilean film-maker Raúl Ruiz's fantasmal sense of place, and it is now the setting for his latest film, *La Terre de midi* (*Dark at Noon*). For this late November shoot, the building's ambience has been enhanced by an eccentric clutter of props: jars of pickled snake; life-size porcelain mastiffs; piles of surgical prosthetic legs; a person-sized pointing hand made of anaemic-looking polystyrene, a ker-

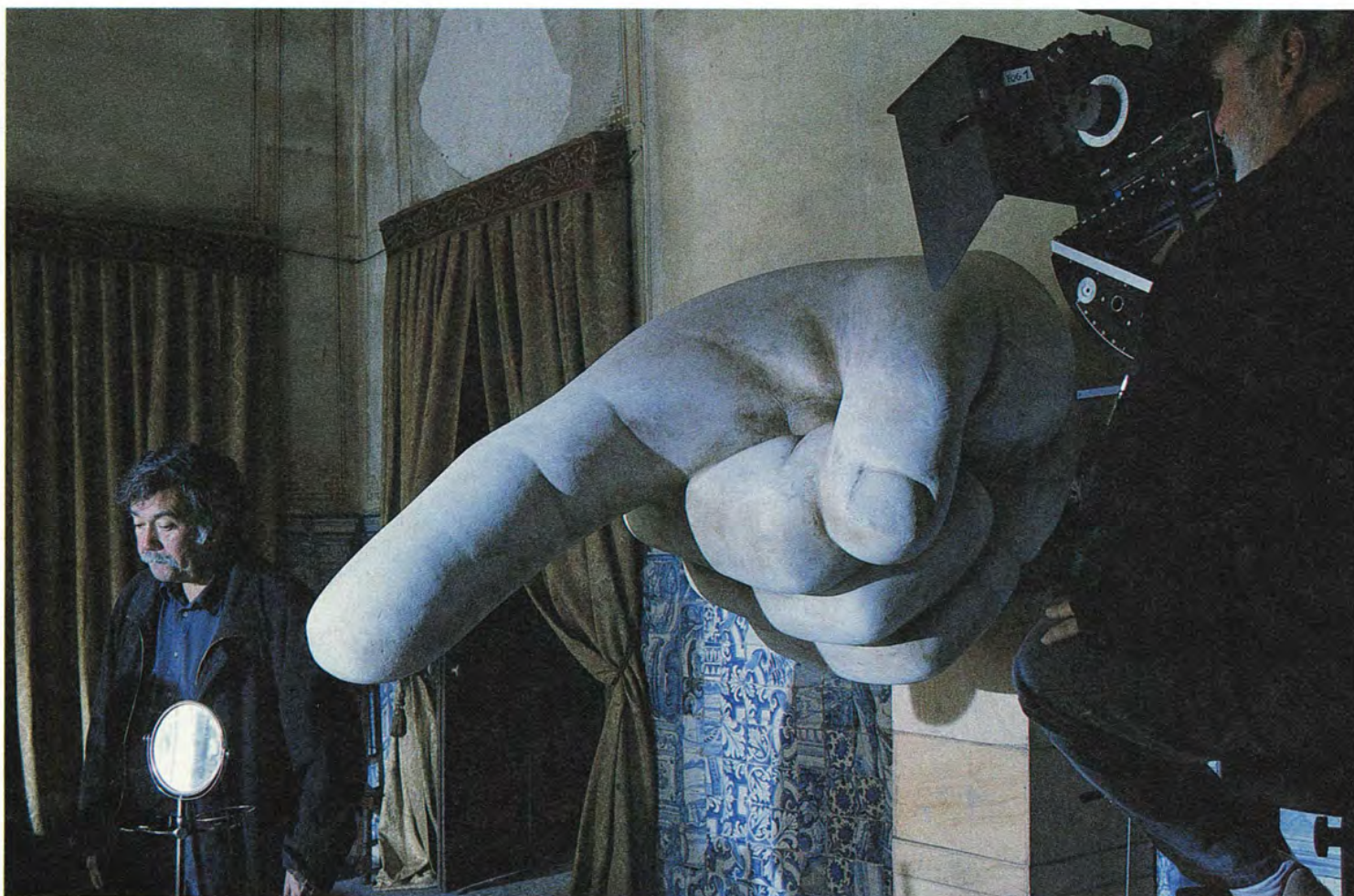
chief tied daintily around its index. In the main salon, where today's shooting takes place, actor Didier Bourdon staggers stiffly around in a fibreglass and plaster corset, to be used in his flying scene. "It looks like a Pinochet-style torture", observes Ruiz. "Something between a porn shop and modern dance".

The truly Ruizian note in this location is set by the blue and white *azulejo* tile murals in the main salon. Running the length of the main wall, ambivalently attired figures (they could be divinities or farmhands) are drawn along in a procession of ox carts. Over the years, however, individual tiles have fallen off and been replaced upside down or sideways, so that the edges of the big picture are a hacked-together composite of mismatched parts.

The cinema of Raúl Ruiz is much like this. The oeuvre of this diverse and prolific director is an assemblage of fragments which fit together imperfectly and may not themselves have a complete shape (Ruiz claims never to

have seen the final versions of many of them). As Jonathan Rosenbaum put it, you could see Ruiz as "less a biological entity than a particular point of convergence between different levels of culture, and a lack of fixed identity or allegiances".

It's reassuring to see that Ruiz is a biological entity – a portly, doleful-looking man who speaks French with a soft and occasionally mystifying Chilean accent, and whose main cause for regret is the fact that he cannot get hold of his favourite Monte Cristo No.3 cigar. This Ruiz is a different being from the 'Raúl Ruiz' who signs each film, and who reinvents himself with each one (some would go so far as to claim that he reinvents cinema too). It's hard to classify his work, if only because there's so much of it. The London Film Festival has shown some recent films: *La Mémoire des apparences* (1987), a collision between sci-fi serial, spy thriller and Calderón produced during his spell as director of the Maison de la Culture at Le Havre; *The*



Golden Boat (1990), an unfocused no-budget film shot over two weekends during a teaching spell at Harvard; and the very loose version of *Treasure Island* shot in Portugal and Senegal in 1986 for Cannon, that may see British release in 1992. But Ruiz's practice of filming constantly, according to available means, has generated an oeuvre that, even more than Godard's, is a permanent work in progress.

Ruiz's career as a Chilean director started in the early 60s and ended in 1973 with his exile, when Pinochet came to power. Settling in Paris, Ruiz began to reinvent himself as a European director – to find ways of articulating a discourse of exile within the language of European art cinema. In fact, he seems to have been intimate with this discourse from early on. "In Chile, even before we went into exile, we

always talked of Latin America as a continent of exile – internal exile, because of the nostalgia for Europe". But in Ruiz's European work, this sense of permanent geographical and cultural displacement expresses itself in an obsessive and apparently haphazard allusiveness to borrowed elements from every possible culture, genre and era – Welles and Borges, Stevenson and Spanish Golden Age drama, Wittgenstein and folk narrative. It also expresses itself in recurring images of fragmented bodies, of libraries scattered to the four winds or assembled from random scraps of material.

This sense of self-recreation, of the atomised self, has rarely been explored in film culture, but is an abiding obsession of modernist literature, and that is where you have to look to find this director's precursors. They are the likes of Apollinaire, whose poetry explored the notion of a self composed of borrowed archetypes; the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa; and above all, the poet, traveller and mythomaniac Blaise

Cendrars, whose picaresque novel *Moravagine* Ruiz has always dreamed of filming. "I have filmed it, somewhere", he says. "There's a little of it in all my films".

The principle of Ruizian diversity – film-making as a continuous Drunkard's Walk between genres and cultures – is perhaps best summed up by the title of *L'Exote*, a film he made recently with students on a course he taught in Lausanne. "It's a word invented by Victor Segalen. It's when you travel the world as a foreigner, looking at each country as something exotic, then when you go back home, that becomes the most exotic place there is. It's a way of becoming foreign to yourself".

One place where Ruiz does appear to be very much at home is Portugal. He started filming there as a result of his association with producer Paolo Branco, at a time when it was a particularly cheap place to film (apparently this is no longer the case). The country has a peculiar symbolic resonance in his films, a sort of ►

The limits of reason: David Warner, John Hurt and Lorraine Evanoff, above left; Raúl Ruiz and finger on set, above

◀ phantom land. In *La Terreur de midi* Ruiz hopes to exploit the desolate rural landscapes of the southern Alentejo region – where filming began – for a particular haunted feel. In the coastal fantasies of *The Territory* (1981), *Three Crowns of the Sailor* (1982) and *Point de fuite* (1984), Portugal becomes a non-place, an apocryphal land that retains its place on the European map only by virtue of its literally marginal position on the mainland, where it marks a border with the Other of the Americas. Ruiz exploited this liminal status in particular in *Three Crowns of the Sailor*, where Portugal stood in for Chile.

"Portugal is in a sense mid-way between Europe and... not so much Latin America, but Chile. The Portuguese, like the Chileans, are rather melancholic. It's a small country, and, as Borges said, all small countries are connected, like mirrors. The first film I made after revisiting Chile – *City of Pirates* – I made here with Chile in mind, using all the idyllic elements of Chile as nightmare elements".

Ruiz has been able to return to Chile since 1983. There is a particularly affecting moment in *Three Crowns*, when the hero returns home to Valparaíso to find out that his mother's house perhaps never existed. Did Ruiz himself, I ask, feel like a tourist on his return? "Guided tour, yes, tourist, no. I have a lot of friends there and it only takes a few seconds for all the time in between to be wiped out, as if you'd never been away. The first time was a shock. I felt like one of the living dead. It wasn't a feeling of nostalgia, it was more like *saudade* – you could call that nostalgia for something that was never there. It's a mixed feeling – you're also glad it was never there".

More recently, Ruiz has started filming in Chile again. He has worked there on a meditation on the Latin American soap opera, *La Telenovela Errante*, as well as on a cookery film, and on six cantos from the *Inferno*, which continue the TV *Dante* series started by Tom Phillips and Peter Greenaway. His version, however, is radically different.

After a host of seemingly fragmentary, impromptu projects, the film Ruiz is now making is possibly the closest he has come to a conventional feature. *La Terreur de midi* is being shot on 35mm, as opposed to his customary 16mm, and has the largest budget he has ever worked with, around £2 million. It features a prestigious, if incongruous, cast of John Hurt, David Warner, and two actors best known in France for television comedy – Daniel Prévost (seen in Claude Berri's *Uranus*), and in the lead role, Didier Bourdon from the comedy trio *Les Inconnus*, who had a hit single in France last summer with the spoof rap 'Auteuil-Neuilly-Passy'. Bourdon, like the other actors, was suggested by producer Leonardo de la Fuente, who describes him as "a French Steve Martin or John Belushi" (in fact, Griff Rhys-Jones may be closer to the mark).

De la Fuente produced Kieslowski's *La Double vie de Véronique*, and sees Ruiz's film as having similar box office potential. The story, though, hardly suggests a Hollywood hit. Set in 1918, it



A matter of spirit: John Hurt, who plays both a manufacturer of prosthetic legs and an androgynous marquis in Ruiz's magic world

concerns a young French doctor (Bourdon) who goes to Portugal to reclaim his family fortune. Once there, this diehard rationalist finds a mysterious village teeming with dogs, an entrepreneur specialising in the manufacture of prosthetic legs (Hurt), an androgynous marquis (Hurt again), and a painter (Warner) who has a habit of burying people alive. There is also a boy who performs miracles and who, according to the synopsis, has a third hand growing in his chest.

How the boy fits into the story is hard to ascertain. Ruiz tells me the boy has been dropped; de la Fuente assures me he is still in the script and that he never had a third hand at all, that he merely carries his hand tucked in his coat, Napoleon-style. I check the English script, which states unequivocally that there is a third hand; I am told this may stem from a fault in translation. One way or another, the script – skeletal as it is – allows you to interpret its events as either supernatural or surreal, and certainly leaves enough leeway for Ruiz to invent his visual effects as shooting proceeds.

The collaboration with de la Fuente was suggested when Ruiz met him at Cannes last summer, but the script had been around since the mid-70s, when Ruiz wrote it as a horror pot-boiler for a Spanish production company. "Leonardo wanted to do it with a normal budget and good actors", says Ruiz, "although originally it was written to be shot in two or three weeks with the world's worst actors. I thought it was a shame to do that with John Hurt, so I rewrote it completely".

De la Fuente was concerned that, in this film, Ruiz should cut down the esoteric literary allusions that fill so much of his work – "referential kitsch", as the producer calls this tendency. Ruiz was happy to oblige, in his way. "They're there", he says, "except that they're not spoken. There are a lot more than usual,

but they're in the images rather than the words. Usually I'll take a poor image and drown it in words".

The film is clearly going to be shaped by the director's current literary and philosophical hobbyhorses. "Everything I was reading at the time found its way into the script – above all, the gnostics. I was reading the German historian Kantorowicz and his speculations on the Trinity; then I discovered Gregory of Nicea on the idea of dualism. There's the idea that matter becomes more and more spiritual, but at the same time spirit is in love with its own constant death, its becoming matter. This constant exchange between matter and spirit is very cinematographic, so I worked on that principle.

"The story is magical. It's the story of the Three Kings, which is a French invention – the notion that the power of performing miracles belongs only to kings, as opposed to the Spanish tradition. That's also in Kantorowicz's book. I also like Bulwer Lytton and all those B-series English writers. So you'll find I've put in a little of all of that".

Theology has been a recurrent theme in Ruiz's work. In *La Vocation suspendue* (1977), a pettifoggish Jesuitical debate builds up into a picture of advanced manipulative paranoia, a sort of Holy Watergate. In *La Terreur de midi*, the spiritual realm is again the object of surveillance; the film is based on an episode reported by Cendrars about a seventeenth-century monk who was forbidden by his superiors to perform miracles. Ruiz himself started his career as a theological student. "I began to study theology", he explains, "then I dropped it. Then in France, I said I'd studied theology, and it was the only thing anyone remembered from my biography. So I was obliged to take it up again, so as not to look stupid. And finally I became really interested".

The theological debates are not immediately evident in the script, but they are hinted at by two garishly executed paintings stacked up on set, both in a nineteenth-century academic mode. One depicts a Virgin and Child emerg-

ing from a day-glo miasma, while in the other the same figures are flanked by twin John Hurts, one an austere, scowling monk, the other cackling away in a parti-coloured jester suit. This is a representation of the "Quinity", Ruiz explains.

The matter-spirit duality appears to relate to the paintings of Ellic (Warner), in which the images emerge fully formed out of a strange ectoplasmic substance. For this afternoon's scene, Didier Bourdon is liberally draped in this cobwebby stuff – in fact, a very fine packing straw – which is also glued to the edges of the painting. Bourdon, his corset now concealed under a trim tweed suit, is suspended in mid-air from a rail that runs the length of the room. It is a set-up for a shot in which Ellic – possessed of superhuman strength – gives Bourdon a gentle push, only to send him flying in a perfect horizontal arc across the room and straight out of the window.

David Warner steps back in poised horror as Bourdon, trailing straw, trundles slowly off along his rail, which will vanish at the editing stage thanks to computer matching. This is the first time Ruiz has had access to sophisticated effects-technology. In the past, he has revelled in B-movie gimcrackery, often of the most transparently shoddy kind, whether it involves plasticine nipples, shots from behind eyelashes or from inside giant mouths, or even – at the most basic – sticking a sheet of glass in front of the camera and drawing round the actor with a pen. *La Terreur de midi* promises to be more sophisticated, though seeing Bourdon dangling helpless in mid-air, you rather hope it won't be too sophisticated.

De la Fuente presents himself as having rescued Ruiz from straitened circumstances. "It was like a painter who only had paper for drawings. Until now, he's done sketches; this is his first painting". This emphasis on budget might strike a discordant note for anyone who believes that a major part of Ruiz's achieve-

ment is precisely in rewriting the rules of no-budget film-making and in creating an unprecedented brand of bargain-basement surrealism. Ruiz on a Hollywood budget would hardly be Ruiz; but this is probably not what de la Fuente has in mind either. "I wanted to give him the chance to be Ophulsian", he says. "All Ruizians have been frustrated to see him not get beyond the Cinéma-thèque. Now people will really understand his humour, his universe, its madness, its magic. Above all, this film has to be magic".

Ruiz likes to call his work "impromptu" rather than experimental, and is pragmatic about the possibilities offered by the substantial budget of *La Terreur de midi*. Apart from the fact that he can spend seven weeks shooting – and therefore give himself the odd coffee break – it allows for a rethink about material. "The new 35mm stock gives excellent definition. With my 16mm films, I always reduced the information, the way that B-movie directors used to do. I always tried to concentrate on two or three unexpected points in the frame. 16mm film is half way – there's a lot of information, but it's not clear enough. So you have to make it more eloquent with filters, by simplifying a lot, playing with shadows. Here I started to use 35mm the same way that I used 16mm, but then I realised there was too much information, so I changed the whole system of *mise en scène*. With this kind of stock, close-ups are almost unnecessary. You can get facial expressions without getting too close, and you can make the space stronger as well. It becomes a lot more theatrical, and I'm trying to make the most of that".

Ruiz is also indulging his perennial fascination with mirrors, using up to three two-way mirrors at a time to create the transmutation of the industrialist Anthony Steel and his lover Inès (Lorraine Evanoff) into one body, and to have characters walk off at frame left and reappear instantly at frame right. "It can give you a

real six-dimensional space", he says. The next day of shooting, he puts his ideas into practice with a complex set-up in the palace's back bedroom. In this shot, the camera surveys the scene before tracking forward to a candlelit chamber at the back where John Hurt, as Steel, quizzes his maid about a hand that someone has left on his desk. The hand turns out to be his own. The camera is hemmed in behind two tables, both laden with statuettes, phials of red liqueur and prostheses, and both mounted on rails, at right angles to each other and diagonally to the camera rail.

From the left hand corner of the room, the camera slowly pans to the right, while the table on the left glides in the opposite direction. Before the camera has turned a full ninety degrees, the table has returned to its first position, and now both tables draw aside as the camera begins to track slowly forward. Meanwhile, two Portuguese actresses playing maids execute a complex ballet, dusting sideboards and mirrors, tossing bedclothes to and fro in front of the advancing camera, then exiting before one crosses the camera's path again to enter the back room. Hurt's voice rings out in mortified bewilderment from behind the curtains: "Whose hand is this?" "Maybe it's yours!" replies the maid, and emerges in a fit of giggles. Hurt staggers out after her, catches sight of his reflection in the mirror, then collapses in an elegant swoon of horror.

The scene has a geometric grace; you can watch it over and over again and still not quite fathom what's happening and why. As two technicians heave the tables back and forth on their rails, it is practically impossible to envisage this on screen, to predict whether it will come across as contrived manoeuvring or profound spatial dislocation. One way or another, it will look Ruizian. The camera resumes position for the next take, and the lighting crew adjusts the light on the mirror, giving this six-dimensional space another bend or two.

Memories of expulsion

Ruiz's recent Paris exhibition, 'The Expulsion of the Moors', is reviewed by Ian Christie

The effect is vertiginous. We are standing as if on the transparent ceiling of a chamber with a black and white chequered floor. 'Beneath' – that's to say in front – is the projected image of a sleeper, tossing restlessly. Are the images which appear on the walls his dreams, or a common decor we share?

In another darkened space only a low rope checks our fall into – what? A labyrinth of columns rises from what looks like a water-filled cistern and in the distance a mullah is seen and heard at prayer. Elsewhere, sinister body bags hang as if in a butcher's store, while the sounds of a police station echo.

The clue to these mysterious and

disturbing *tableaux vivants*, combining elegant mirror effects with a stunning use of video projection, is an epochal episode in European history: Spain's expulsion of its Moorish population. The occasion – and excuse for this being an exhibition at the prestigious Jeu de Paume in Paris – is the celebration of Velasquez's allegory on the subject. But that painting, the artist's only major allegory, turns out to have been destroyed by fire in the eighteenth century.

Divine retribution for Catholic Spain's crime against its Muslim population? An echo of our intolerance towards Islam and incomprehension of its culture? The title of the exhibition's catalogue, *The Book of Disappearances*, echoes the modern nightmare of Latin America's 'disappeared' victims, while its form acknowledges the Islamic ban on human representation: half its text only pages are printed in reverse and can only be read with

the aid of a foil mirror.

Ruiz's references and strategies may be as esoteric as ever, but both the exhibition and catalogue spring from urgent personal concerns. One is the experience of exile, which Ruiz has known since 1973. He clearly identifies with the Moors, as with all minorities persecuted for their difference, whether of religion, language or race, and he believes it is those who expel that are ultimately the losers. Another tableau in the exhibition is an 'ordinary' room with a television showing Spanish documentary material: exile means emptiness, absence from history, the weight of memory.

Spain's attraction for Ruiz in recent years is not only that it represents the authentic tradition of which Chile is a kind of parody, but its golden age (of which the Moors and the Jews were a vital part) also offered that lost unity of art, religion and science that fascinates him.

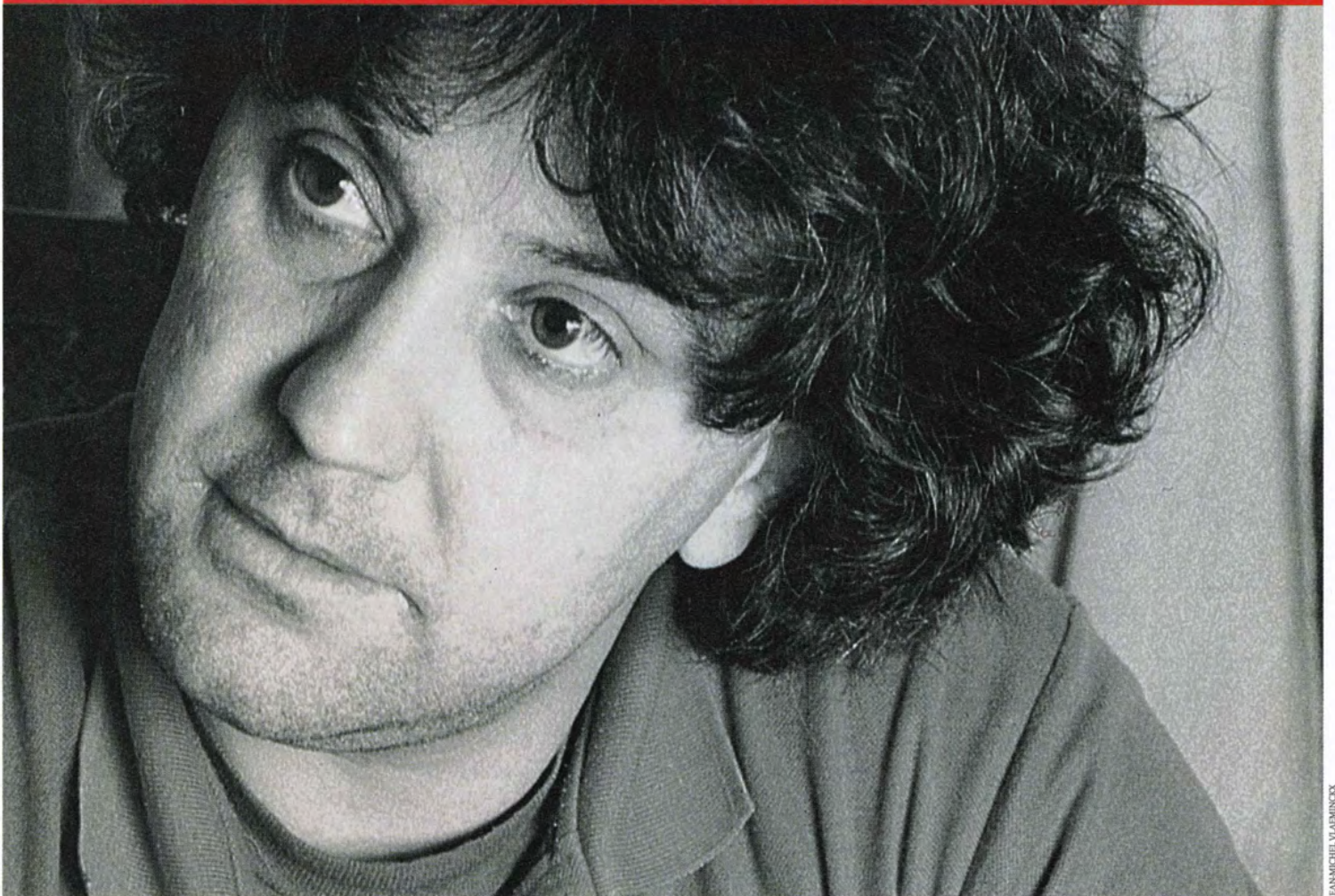
The Book of Disappearances, besides its Calvino-like fables of the legendary and grotesque, includes such theological-scientific speculation as Boethius on "the geometry of music as the skeleton of the time of the universe".

Ruiz finds in texts like this metaphors that illuminate the metaphysics of film and express his own longing for an organic culture – a post-modern yearning for the pre-modern. This exhibition, like his remarkable production of Calderón's *Life is a Dream* at Le Havre and his Chilean cantos of Dante's *Inferno*, are all manifestations of a rich curiosity and creativity that reproaches our complacent secular Eurocentrism. Not to mention our nostalgia for a film industry.

The exhibition 'L'Expulsion des Maures' was at the Jeu de Paume from 4 October to 1 December 1991. *The Book of Disappearances* is published by Editions Dis Voir, Paris, in French and English editions.

Home lands

Palestinian film-makers Michel Khleifi and Omar Al-Qattan talk to Philip Dodd about a poor cinema, Arab culture, and making new kinds of films in Europe



JOAN MICHEL VLAMINCKX

● Michel Khleifi was born in 1950 in Nazareth into a Palestinian family. After leaving school at fourteen and working for six years as a car mechanic, he left Israel in 1970 and settled in Belgium, where he took up studies in theatre and film and later taught at INSAS (Institut National Supérieur des Arts du Spectacle). His films include *Fertile Memory* (1980), a documentary portrait of two women, a factory worker from Nazareth and a novelist in the Occupied Territories; *Maaloul* (1984), a documentary about a Palestinian village in Galilee which has been destroyed by the Israelis, but whose former inhabitants are able to visit it once a year on the anniversary of Israel's independence; *Wedding in Galilee* (1987, International Critics Prize, Cannes), a full-length feature in which the military machine of the Israeli occupation and the archaic structure of a Palestinian village come into conflict with new realities; and *Canticle of Stones* (1989, Official Selection, Cannes), a docu-feature describing rekindled love in the midst of the Palestinian intifada.

Omar Al-Qattan was born in 1964 in Beirut into a Palestinian family. Following the outbreak of civil war in the Lebanon in 1975, he was sent away to school in England, where he also went to university. Following a chance meeting with Michel Khleifi, he moved to Brussels to study film production and directing at INSAS. In 1988 he set up a production company which produced Khleifi's *Canticle of Stones* and his own directorial debut, *Rêves et silences* (*Dreams and Silence*, 1991). He moved back to England in 1991 and set up a sister company.

Philip Dodd: Tell me how you came to work together.

Omar Al-Qattan We met six years ago, while I was still at university in England. There was a film club and a Palestine club, and I managed to convince them to do something together. So I suggested we invite Michel over from Belgium to show *Fertile Memory*. I told him I was interested in doing a film course after I graduated, and he suggested I come to INSAS, where he was teaching at the time. Michel taught me during my first three years, but then he resigned because of disagreements with the administration.

Michel Khleifi In the 70s INSAS was home to many Arabs who went on to become quite important in Arab cinema, and in some cases in world cinema. There were people from all over the Arab world: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Lebanon and Palestine. Brussels offered us the opportunity of exchange with the Belgians and with Europe, something which was much more difficult in big cities like Paris or London, where cultural activity is so overwhelming that as foreign students we would have been crushed. In Brussels we were able to advance at our own pace, to begin to understand European culture – which is, of course, a centuries-old process – and at the same time to reflect on our own culture, and thus create a dialogue. This was very important, because we came to believe that it was possible to bring into being a cultural movement or school of ideas, of aes-

Khleifi: To safeguard our own culture, we would have to engage with other cultures



'Wedding in Galilee': in the award-winning film by Khleifi, left, a Palestinian family under Israeli occupation prepares for a traditional wedding

thetics, of film-making. We belonged to the 70s, and at the time we were very interested in the idea of a culture of the poor: how, with scant means, we could arrive at an expression of extreme richness.

You have used three phrases there: the Arab world, our own culture, and the culture of the poor. Can you talk about the relationship of one to the other?

MK Arab culture is dominated, not dominant. Despite a nostalgia for its past grandeur, it is an extremely poor society, and thus linked to the culture of the poor. Moreover, most of the Arab students at INSAS at that time came from poor backgrounds. So it seemed to us that in order to safeguard our own culture, we would have to engage with other cultures, especially the dominant European culture. The problem was how not to melt away into European culture, while at the same time enriching ourselves, in order to communicate with this culture. I am still very keen on the idea of linking the culture of the poor, the culture of the Third World, with other cultures, so that this dominated culture can emerge to challenge and begin a dialogue with other cultures, especially those of the so-called advanced societies. We shouldn't try to imitate, to make films that are similar but better than the most advanced in Europe and elsewhere. There has to be a cultural confrontation which will produce a new synthesis.

OAQ My experience has been the opposite. I had spent ten years in England when I arrived in Brussels, and I think I could say that I came from a culture of the rich, in every sense of the

word. When I arrived at the school in 1985 the situation described by Michel had almost disappeared. There were fewer foreign students, and most of my colleagues were from relatively well-off families.

MK That's right: the 80s was a decade of efficiency in scriptwriting, of commercial cinema, above all a European cinema which suffered and still suffers from an inferiority complex in relation to its American counterpart.

OAQ Few students knew about the great European masters; their main references were American. What was interesting for me in getting to know Michel was that though by my language and culture I was very close to him, at the same time there were major areas of difference: I had spent all my life from age eleven in Europe, whereas he did not leave Palestine until he was twenty; he came from within the 1948 state of Israel, whereas I had never been able to live in Palestine. But instead of separating us these things were meeting points.

Michel, do you see your cinema, unlike Omar's, as a cinema of exile?

OAQ But theoretically I too am in exile.

MK And in any case, I believe all expression is an expression of exile. One doesn't express oneself, in the deepest sense of the term, because one is feeling comfortable with one's place in the world. Take Rimbaud, for example, who wrote all his literature as an exile, even though he was in France. And when he really went into exile, he ceased to write.

But the difference was that for Rimbaud exile was a metaphor, whereas for you it is a literal expulsion.

MK No, in my case I went into voluntary exile. After 1967, when I was seventeen, I started asking myself questions about my life and I decided I had three options: to become militant, to become part of the silent majority, or to leave. I chose exile. But I didn't know that this was how I would come to discover cinema.

Do you see yourself as part of an Arab cinema?

MK Not all Arab cinema. I don't feel close to Egyptian cinema, for example, though in my childhood I had seen a few Egyptian films – not many, because before 1967 it was illegal to distribute Egyptian films in Israel. Then when I came to Europe I went from being a popular spectator to discovering a magnificent new language that was an expression of contemporary philosophy, of all kinds of movements: everything that is movement is in cinema. Thus my relationship with the cinema is rational, in the sense that I discovered it when I was already an adult. It is in this sense that I choose to reflect on Arab culture, on European culture, on culture as a whole.

OAQ Although I have very strong links with my Arab culture and identity, I think it would be impossible for me to claim an affiliation with any particular country's cinema; I share preoccupations with film-makers from many countries. I consider myself to be working in a universal language and a very varied, sometimes self-contradictory, culture and I see this as a strength rather than a weakness – at ►

◀ least I am unable to do work which is parochial and self-limiting. Or at least I hope that's the case.

How has your work been received in Belgium? I understand that your new film will be about a Belgian subject. How was that news received by other film-makers and by the industry?

MK You have to understand that if your work puts you in the limelight, there will always be people who are out to trap you. For example, after I made *Wedding in Galilee* and *Canticle of Stones* I was asked whether I would go on making films about Palestine. I used to wonder whether Fellini is ever asked if he's going to go on making films about Italy, or Satyajit Ray about India. Obviously Fellini stayed in Rome and Ray in India, whereas when Tarkovsky went into exile, he too was asked whether he would go on making films about Russia; these questions are in part legitimate. Yet they can also become ridiculous, because when I say I want to make a European film, they are surprised, and say: "You mean you're not going to make any more films about Palestine?" Personally, I don't think this is the right question: what I am more concerned about is whether there is a continuity of ideas and questions which are mine and which carry through in all my projects.

Can you tell us something about the new film, 'L'Ordre du jour'?

MK The main idea was to write the drama of a person who no longer has any drama in his life. This, of course, is a paradox: is living a sort of imitation, simulation drama? But above all, the film is the story of a post-Romantic being trapped by the abstract structure of modern bureaucracy. The protagonist is an employee in a ministry and this structure is far more powerful than he is. But he finds himself without any desire or resources to revolt, since this same structure emanates from his own desires (one mustn't forget that across the twentieth century most of the working class thought that one major way of social and economic advancement would be in their children becoming civil servants). He lives with his son and finds himself embroiled in a corruption scandal which leads to nothing, except to eliminate completely his identity. And to punctuate his life, he dreams.

OAQ The interesting thing is that I feel that in some ways I am a product of the same system as this hero, or anti-hero. For example, the way my generation was taught cinema is revealing. The most important exercise we were given was to re-film in our own way a scene from a film of our own choosing. Obviously all this method can teach is the mechanics of making a film, the technique involved; our energies and talents, if we had any, could only be stretched in the direction of imitation. Cinema was thus taught as an abstract system dominating us, rather like the anti-hero of *L'Ordre du jour* is dominated by bureaucracy. We were not encouraged to relate to our work as a complex and difficult process of thinking and interaction with our collective lives, our surround-

Al-Qattan: We dream all the time of a distribution network in the Arab world to show our films



ings. The prospect of inventing, of discovering, was terrifying.

When Michel started teaching me in my second year he asked us to make a three-minute film about a place, a portrait of a place. And when he asked what I intended to do I remember being so worried by my lack of resources that to my shame I started crying. I now understand this as being scared of the paradoxical situation we were put in: we had always been given the resources to make our films, but we were never encouraged to think, to observe, to read, to discover our subjects; we had been expected to imitate, to engage in a second-hand sort of film-making. Perhaps this is a paradox still felt today by anyone working in the powerful machine of commercial cinema.

Can we turn to documentary, which is where you both started. What do you think are its strengths and limitations?

MK Despite what we said about the 80s, I was still able to create in INSAS a curriculum based on a cinema of reality. And it is interesting that this is the only course that has survived and has turned out to be of any coherence. The reason, I think, is because this approach helps a young director to cope with his or her reality, much more so than dreaming of becoming a Coppola or a Scorsese. The idea was to make the students think: what can I do with a camera and a Nagra recorder? How far can I go?

OAQ Also, this programme was not limited to practical work; it was accompanied by a series of seminars in which we could discuss and think about cinema – not just documentaries, but any kind of film. And what I learnt most was that cinema is a language of expression, expression of time and space, and in this sense it requires us to think – about ourselves, our relationship to what we film, who we express ourselves to. I understood that like any genuine expression, it must emanate from thought, not from imitation. When I say expression, it obviously implies a synthesis of what is real and what is thought, of me and of others. So in this sense we learned to collapse the barriers between documentary and fiction and to see that we were dealing with the same language.

Yes. And obviously 'Rêves et silences' is itself a paradoxical title for a documentary.

OAQ This paradox is part of both the form and the method of the film, which is a montage that takes us from the daily life of a Palestinian refugee woman living in Jordan to the discourse of a religious senator who belongs to a mystical school of thought. It tries to identify the contradictions between modern Islamic political thought and the everyday problems the woman faces.

There are contradictions and confusions on all levels: between the senator's political discourse and the pragmatic, down-to-earth logic of the Palestinian refugee; between her desire to return to Palestine, to work, to take a lover, and her constant seeking of refuge in God whenever she feels despair or impotence; between rationality, in the crude, political demagoguery of the senator, and his claim to address matters of the spirit. These confusions are most blatant in the mystical dancing in the film, where an extremely physical, even sexual, exercise has a spiritual end: to enter into an ecstatic trance and come closer to Him.

The fact that such confusions exist is a source of great conflict, even violence in the Arab world. But what I tried to show is that this need not be the case, for when these contradictions come into dialectical opposition in the film, they may force us to think of ways of finding synthesis and harmony rather than conflict. After all, making a film is an exercise in synthesis, in trying to bring together my subjectivity and these objectivities, in dreaming of a reality and realising a dream.

Coming back to the programme that Michel taught us, and this relates to the economy of cinema, he gave us a text by Brecht called 'Five elements for telling the truth' and the wonderful short video by Godard, in which he talks about the making of *Passion*. Godard says that narrative and scriptwriting began when the first producers had to start paying their actors and collaborators. The first scenario, he says, corresponds to: 1 Policeman \$5, 1 Lover \$10. And in relation to what we were saying about the cinema of the poor and the cinema of the rich, the gap between the fantasy of directors' subjects today and reality is almost operatic in its enormity. We need only cite the case of Léos Carax's *Les Amants du Pont-Neuf* (1990), which is a film about homeless paupers that cost three times the average budget of a French film.

Do you think that television has changed the grammar of film?

MK Of course. First of all, the zoom broke something. Though at first it brought something new, it was then abused and instead of taking decisions as to where to place their cameras, directors started using them mechanically. It's not surprising that when you see films which were made before the zoom you find wonderful qualities of inventiveness and care in the choice of frames, of camera movements.

Could you imagine either of you working only for television?

MK I think that now there is a generation which is going beyond television. If in the 70s

and 80s television was winning ground, now it has approached saturation point. Cinema, especially American cinema, was conditioned by television to such a point that film-making became an elaborated television aesthetic. But I think that now we are beginning to resist this. I think that we understand today that though we cannot live without television, we can nonetheless subvert it. In *Canticle of Stones*, for example, I combined two very different forms: an extremely stylised fictional style and reportage. This meant that the programmers didn't know which slot to put it in – this is what I mean by subverting television.

OAQ When *Canticle of Stones* came out in Belgium, it was released on television and in the cinemas on the same day. I don't know whether this was intended by Michel to be subversive, but it was, even if in commercial terms it had no logic whatsoever.

MK In *Wedding in Galilee*, the narrative is linked to the sun, to day-time and night-time, and it is very difficult to screen night scenes on television. I think many film-makers are beginning to understand this problem. This is why someone like Kubrick remains firmly cinematographical, and though we know that film and television need each other, we must work towards creating a schism with television. At the moment, the cinematic adventure is less interesting because people don't have the tools to make a film; we have gone backwards, we are always bound to a narrative, to the pollution of television. Our capacity for concentration is shrinking – whereas before we used to watch three-hour films, nowadays even ninety minutes is too long.

This leads to another awkward question: where is the kind of cinema that you make – cinema made in Europe – seen?

MK I think that a film is made for whoever will like it – I don't think that one makes a film for Europeans, or for Arabs, or Africans; one just makes a film. This is what we were saying: cinema is a homeland in itself! Though our films are banned in the Arab world, they are clandestinely distributed on video. I've just returned from Damascus, where I was surprised to discover how well known my films are, even though they have never been distributed. Three cineclubs have been closed for showing *Wedding in Galilee* on video. And here we have different problems, because our films are not considered as part of European cinema.

OAQ When *Wedding in Galilee* was shown here on BBC2, it was at a very late hour; I suppose when Channel 4 eventually comes round to showing *Canticle of Stones*, it will be after midnight. My film *Rêves et silences* was shown at 11.30pm on FR3 in France... We're a bit fed up with this association we seem to have with the night, we'd like to see the light a bit. We dream all the time of a distribution network in the Arab world through which our films could be shown, but there are no copyright laws to protect us, and there is censorship. It's an ironic situation: the Arab world sees our films illegally but on a very wide scale, so we come out financially at a loss and morally victorious,

whereas in Europe almost the opposite is true. And in the Arab world some people accuse us of being agents of the West, whereas in Europe we are made to feel like intruders.

Are there any signs that things are changing in France or Belgium, that things are getting any better?

OAQ For Michel, there has been some progress because he is now quite well known. But we also know that we remain marginal, and I think it's a fate we share with many others, including some of the European directors. So there are two problems: being Arab, and being non-conformist.

MK That's true, but it's also important to remember that films about Arabs, and especially about Palestine, are not saleable for concrete reasons. We are at war with Israel, and it is a historical coincidence that many people in this field, by their religious or political or philosophical or ethnic affiliations, are directly linked to Israel, and those who are not are linked to those who are. This means that cultural exchanges take on political dimensions which often lead to subtle forms of censorship or self-censorship. I see this as extremely unfortunate. Of course we are aware that truth does not exist in one film alone – that's why we like to be considered as people who participate in the elaboration of this or that point of view; that's why we defend the necessity of seeing Israeli films or pro-Israeli films. But the problem is that there are people who are against this point of view. They don't want us to participate in this elaboration of an international point of view; they would rather have us excluded. It is in this sense that I understood the censorship of *Canticle of Stones*: it's as if any expression of Palestinian suffering or opinion must always be contained, especially if it is in a film that was in Cannes.

OAQ At the recent Amsterdam Documentary Film Festival they organised a retrospective called 'Israel/Palestine'. Many of the films they wanted to show belonged to the Israeli film archive and other government organisations and the Foreign Ministry decided to withdraw at the last minute because, I think, the word Palestine figured along with Israel in the title.

Why have you both placed women at the centre of your films?

OAQ You know that women live on a daily basis under very severe constraints in the Arab world. And this oppression is part and parcel of so many other forms of oppression that one

cannot escape talking about the oppression of women. Michel likes to give women a philosophical dimension; personally I disagree with this notion, but in any case, in order to be truthful, it is inevitable that we have to deal with these issues in our films.

MK Also, it is impossible to think of oppression without wondering whether the victim is nothing but a victim. It's not easy for Palestinians to learn that their Israeli oppressors are themselves victims of history: that they are both oppressors and victims. So then you ask yourself whether you too are only a victim, or whether you are an oppressor as well. And when you look at Arab society, you discover that this same oppressed society also oppresses others: men oppress women, the rich the poor, mothers their daughters, the strong the weak. In this hierarchy of the victim who is oppressor, there is no question that women and children are at the bottom of the heap.

But why place them at the centre? Did that mean that you found new formal problems in making the films?

MK No. It's true that form is linked to subject matter, but here I am talking about a collective state of being which we are trying to express. For me, woman is the Other within me. As far as we know we are made by a mother and a father, and though it is easier for me to identify with my father, I cannot exclude my mother, who is within me. So we try to find an equilibrium. We know that the liberation of Arab women can only happen through the liberation of the individual, and though this liberation may lead to anxiety, solitude, which you know so well here, we feel we no longer have the right to let the train pass by. This is why so many Arab film-makers in the last ten or fifteen years have used women as a means of expression for the state of Arab society.

OAQ The problem is to resist the tendency of making the idea of women into objects. I often wonder whether this obsession in Arab cinema doesn't stem from the same phallogocentric fantasy as the obsession of radical fundamentalist Moslems, who wish to repress and silence women, and whether both obsessions aren't the result of the same veiled point of view.

One last question, much less serious. Which films do you see for pleasure?

MK I like to recapture my childhood by going to see adventure films, for example Michael Curtiz's, which are much better and more elaborate and significant than adventure films made today, trying, as they were, to discover a new sort of humanity after the war.

OAQ The other day I saw Hawks' *Bringing Up Baby*, which I thought was beautiful.

MK I am sad to say that, perhaps because of my age, I prefer older films; I find contemporary films alien. I think it's also because I have lyrical tastes, and I try, paradoxically, to link lyricism with rationality. I like films which participate in liberating the language of cinema: Pasolini, Antonioni, Ken Loach. This is what I mean when I say that cinema is a homeland. *'Canticle of Stones'* will be screened in March on Channel 4 as part of a Palestinian/Israeli film season.



'Rêves et silences': a dream fades and becomes a homeland in Al-Qattan's documentary

Alexander Cockburn
on 'JFK', Kennedy and
Vietnam in the 60s –
and what led Oliver Stone
to believe in the myth of
the fallen hero

John and Oliver's bogus adventure



Whether JFK was killed by a lone assassin or by a conspiracy has about as much to do with the subsequent contours of US politics as if he had tripped over one of Caroline's dolls and broken his neck in the White House nursery. But many people think otherwise, believing that if it can be demonstrated that the Warren Commission was wrong and Lee Harvey Oswald not the lone killer, then we have proof of a rightist conspiracy successfully engineered to change the course of history.

Oliver Stone adopts the view that a right-wing conspiracy came to fruition on 22 November 1963, with the following justifications: "Kennedy was moving to end the cold war and sign a nuclear treaty with the Soviets; he would not have gone to war in south-east Asia. He was starting a backdoor negotiation with Castro". Hence "the first *coup d'état* in America". And in his film *JFK*, Stone leaves no doubt about the coup's sponsors: a sequence in grainy black and white newsfilm shows LBJ co-ordinating plans for the assassination with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. So Stone's *JFK* can be seen as a \$40 million equivalent to Barbara Garson's 60s satire *McBird*, though his model is a different Shakespeare play.

"We have all become Hamlets in our country, children of a slain father-leader whose killers still possess the throne. The ghost of John Kennedy confronts us with the secret murder at the heart of the American dream. He forces on us the appalling question: Of what is

our Constitution made? What is our citizenship – and more, our lives, worth? What is the future, where a President can be assassinated under conspicuously suspicious circumstances, while the machinery of legal action scarcely trembles? How many political murders disguised as heart attacks, cancer, suicides, airplane and car crashes, drug overdoses, will occur before they are exposed for what they are?" Stone put these words into the mouth of Kevin Costner, in the role of New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison, at the climax of Garrison's case against the Warren Commission. In life, Garrison was absent from the courtroom during the final summation of his case against New Orleans businessman Clay Shaw and the last speech was made by an aide. The jurors returned within the hour to clear Shaw, though they later said they believed there had been a conspiracy to kill JFK. Moving even further from reality, Stone had at one point planned to have the ghost of JFK appear to Garrison as he stood in his kitchen in New Orleans while watching the news of Bobby Kennedy's assassination in 1968.

Crippling nuttiness

The "Hamlet" speech is an important one, for in its truly fascist yearning for the "father-leader" taken from the children-people by conspiracy, it accurately catches the crippling nuttiness of what passes in many radical circles for mature analysis: that virtue in government



Conspiracy to confuse: Kevin Costner as DA Jim Garrison and Jay O. Sanders as his chief investigator, on one side of the fence in 'JFK'

Canadian diplomat and subsequently professor of English at the University of California at Berkeley, attempted to prove by philological analysis that whereas the official editors of the Papers working in the Pentagon – headed by Leslie Gelb, now a columnist for the *New York Times* – who assembled the documentation on US involvement in Vietnam for Defense Secretary Robert McNamara wanted to show a continuity of Vietnam policy between JFK and LBJ, the opposite was the case.

Scott's focus was on the shifts that occurred in the formal expression of policy from October 1963, through the Honolulu meeting of 20 November attended by JFK's top advisors, to LBJ's first policy meeting on Vietnam the day of JFK's funeral (24 November), attended by the same top advisors and culminating in a White House policy document, NSAM 273. Just as conspiracy buffs spend hours disputing the fall of light in the *Life* photograph of Oswald carrying a rifle, suggesting the photograph might be a composite, Scott places enormous weight on infinitesimal textual alterations, signalling the changes with urgent italic.

Thus on 2 October, the Kennedy White House position was that "The security of South Vietnam is a major interest of the United States as other free nations [sic]. We will adhere to our policy of working with the people and government of South Vietnam to deny this country to communism and to suppress the externally stimulated and supported insurgency of the Viet Cong as promptly as possible. *Effective performance* in this undertaking is the *central objective* of our policy in South Vietnam". This statement, construed by Scott as of essentially benign intent, is contrasted with the language of NSAM 273, which he takes as a reversal of policy by LBJ, pointing towards escalation in the war: "It remains the *central objective* of the United States in South Vietnam to assist the people and Government of that country to win their contest against the externally directed and supported communist conspiracy. *The test of all US decisions and actions in this area should be the effectiveness of their contributions to this purpose*".

Double talk

To the sensible eye, such differences may be accounted for by the determination of the uncertain Johnson White House to display to the world its resolve, as opposed to the slightly more anfractuious language of a Kennedy White House steering a path through the Buddhist crisis, the impending coup against Ngo Dinh Diem, the discontents of liberals at growing involvement, and the rage of conservatives that not enough was being done. There was, however, no change in policy, and the measure of Scott's fantasising may be gauged by his claim later in the same essay for the "overall Kennedy strategy for movement towards international relaxation of the cold war and conversion to a full employment economy at home".

One often hears this kind of 'if only' talk from the Kennedy fans and conspiracy buffs.

Military spending was slowing near the end of JFK's term for exactly the same reason as it slowed near the end of Reagan's season in office: the largest and most rapid military build-up in the peacetime history of the US had been successfully achieved. JFK had doubled the number of Polaris nuclear submarines, increased Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missile purchases by 75 per cent, tactical nukes in western Europe by 60 per cent and the total number of weapons in the US nuclear arsenal by 100 per cent. Having fought the 1960 election on an imaginary missile gap, JFK then acted as if this gap were genuine. In *High Priests of Waste*, Ernie Fitzgerald claims that the military spending surge of the Kennedy years undermined all rational standards of productivity and cost/quality control achieved in the preceding seven decades. The idea that JFK was methodically tilting towards a full-employment civilian economy is preposterous.

Bright hopes

Scott's essay has had a pertinacious half-life, and one of those paying tribute to it is military historian John Newman, one of Stone's advisors on the film. Newman's manuscript of *JFK and Vietnam* was passed by Ray and Schaap to Stone, who assisted in its dispatch to Time-Warner (the studio backing *JFK*), whose subsidiary Warner Books is publishing it next February. Those interested in the cultural contradictions of capitalism should note that Time-Warner also owns *Time* magazine, which took a fierce establishment view of the film on whose success the hopes of the parent company are pinned.

JFK and Vietnam is a serious book with two curious features. One is the absence of any substantial evidence for the author's frequently repeated claim that by February or March of 1963 JFK had decided to pull out of Vietnam once the 1964 election was won. Newman's only sources for this are people to whom JFK would, as a matter of political opportunism, have spoken in such terms, such as Senators Wayne Morse and Mike Mansfield, both critical of the escalating involvement in Vietnam. Against their recollections may be placed the accounts of those to whom JFK spoke out of the other side of his mouth, such as Dean Rusk, his Secretary of State, or even Bobby Kennedy, who said later, "The President felt he had a strong, overwhelming reason for being in Vietnam and that we should win the war".

Oliver Stone looks back on the assassination as the gravestone of all the bright hopes of the early 60s. But to get a more realistic insight, all you have to do is visit an auto museum and look at the colours. Bright hopes were really being born in the mid-50s, with Detroit palettes of desert rose, aqua, even paisley. By the time of the New Frontier, the colours had darkened into the dreary greens, tans and dark blues of combat. With their three-year lead times, the colours tell the story. Kennedy had betrayed the hopes of people like Stone before he had even stepped off the inauguration stand.

"Get a life", Captain Kirk once told some Trekkies, launching a new catchphrase on ►

died in Dallas and that a 'secret agenda' has perverted the national destiny ever since. With this demented view, left joins hands with right, in that right-wing populists too see a secret conspiracy – Bilderberg, the Trilateral Commission, the Freemasons, the bankers, the Jews – at the heart of the state's proceedings. With speeches such as this, Stone is tapping into a motherlode of historical paranoia.

The psychic ancestry of *JFK* may be traced at least in part to Ellen Ray, who met Stone at a film festival in Havana and placed a copy of Garrison's *On the Trail of the Assassins* in his hand. Publisher, with Bill Schaap, of Garrison's book, Ray has long felt that history did a U-turn for the worse when conspiracy laid JFK low, though why Ray and Schaap, whose Sheridan Square Press also publishes the *Covert Action Information Bulletin* (which chronicles the misdeeds of the CIA) and *Lies of Our Times* (exposés of mainstream journalism) should take this position remains a mystery to me, despite the many arguments we've had on the subject.

Intellectual ancestry for the assertion that had he lived, JFK would have pulled the US out of Vietnam can be traced back to an essay by Peter Dale Scott, 'Vietnamisation and the Drama of the Pentagon Papers'. This appeared in the fifth volume of the Senator Gravel edition of the *Pentagon Papers* (Beacon Press, 1972), edited by Noam Chomsky and Howard Zinn and offering critical commentary designed to put the Papers in perspective. Scott, a former

◀ the world. Get some history too. Critics of *JFK* like Tom Wicker have fretted in the *New York Times* that "in an era when mistrust of government and loss of confidence in institutions (the press not least) are widespread and virulent, such a suggestion [i.e. that the ruling elites murdered JFK] seems a dubious public service". In fact, the dubious public service is to suggest that JFK himself was not a functional representative of those elites.

The real JFK presided over a vast military build-up, backed a military coup in Guatemala to keep out Arevalo, denied the Dominican Republic the possibility of land reform, helped promote a devastating cycle of Latin American history (including the anticipatory motions of the military coup in Brazil), and backed a Ba'ath coup in Iraq that set a certain native of Takrit on the path to power. JFK presided over Operation Mongoose, inflicting terror upon Cuba. At the very moment bullets brought JFK's life to its conclusion, a CIA officer operating firmly within the bounds of presidential policy was handing poison to a Cuban agent in Paris, designed to assassinate Castro.

Fallen hero

Lawrence J. Bassett and Stephen Pelz wrote in the 1989 collection *Kennedy's Quest for Victory* that, "by pitting American advisors in harms way... he helped to engage American patriotism in a war against the Vietnamese people. Arguing that Vietnam was a test of the West's ability to defeat the people's war strategy and a test of American credibility in the Cold War, he raised the costs of withdrawal for his successor". JFK sent in 16,000 advisors, sponsored the strategic hamlet programme, launched napalm and defoliation upon the south and covert terror and sabotage upon the north. He never entertained the idea of negotiations.

Thomas Paterson, editor of the *Quest for Victory* volume, put it well, urging respect for history and unpleasant reality and "the need to reckon with a past that has not always matched the selfless and self-satisfying images Americans have of their foreign policy and of Kennedy as their young, fallen hero who never had a chance. Actually, he had his chance, and he failed".

But there will always be people like Stone eager to give JFK another retrospective chance, maintaining against all the evidence that had he lived, the 'Grand Perhaps' would have assumed a rosier tint. Stone's history is literary and self-absorbed and his readings of the 60s deeply romantic: Jim Morrison is Chatterton or Keats; JFK is the *revenant* from Wagner.

History, in the form of JFK, landed Stone in Vietnam, and Stone's politics and art would be more coherent if he steeled himself to pin the donkey's tail where it belongs. Stone should be smart enough to know what nonsense the romantic view of history, with paeans to the dead "father-leader", is. He would have ended up in Vietnam even if JFK's limousine had turned left rather than right when it entered Dealey Plaza. And from such knowledge would have come better art.

What is a paranoia movie?, asks Adam Barker, looking at work from Coppola to 'JFK'

Cries and whispers

● With everyone from *Newsweek* to George Bush up in arms about Oliver Stone's new film, it's easy to forget that *JFK* is a movie, and what's more, it's a genre movie. The theme of the Kennedy assassination is nothing new to Hollywood, and neither is political conspiracy. Indeed, the mid-70s was something of a golden age of political paranoia, as films such as *All the President's Men* (1976), *The Parallax View* (1974) and *The Conversation* (1974) show. Taking their cue from the Watergate scandal, these films portray establishment forces prepared to resort to anything to protect their own interests. They also provide some fascinating points of comparison with *JFK*, setting Stone's achievements as a film-maker – rather than simply as a politician – in perspective.

The movie which bears the most obvious resemblance to *JFK* is Alan Pakula's *All the President's Men*. Like Jim Garrison, Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward set out to investigate an ordinary crime and stumble on a major conspiracy. This is the 'heroic quest' model of conspiracy thriller, where virtuous protagonists pursue evil men whose activities are finally revealed. "I'm doing my job to make sure my kids don't grow up in a country where justice is an arcane idea they read about in history books", proclaims Kevin Costner's Garrison.

But placing the audience unequivocally on the side of the investigators is a hazardous strategy when dealing with real people. Stone admits to whitewashing Garrison for the sake of dramatic convenience, while revelations have made it clear that there was more to Bernstein and Woodward than Redford and Hoffman's squeaky-clean portrayals would lead us to believe. The moral clarity of *All the President's Men* extends beyond characterisation to visual oppositions. As in the old days, when you could tell the good cowboys by the colour of their hats, the film alternates between shady encounters in underground car parks and the blinding white light of the *Washington Post* offices, where the activities of the creatures of darkness are held up for judgment. The central dramatic figure who emerges from the shadows is Woodward's source, Deep Throat – a Sphinx-like figure who gives only enigmatic slivers of guidance.

While Deep Throat never quite sheds his establishment skin, the analogous figure in *JFK* is more straightforward. Colonel X, played by Donald Sutherland, is a former head of security operations who spills all to Garrison. Understandably annoyed at having been packed off to the South Pole on the day of the assassination, he subsequently realises that his absence wasn't a coincidence – it allowed the

removal of the special security around Kennedy. X's importance in *JFK* is central: he acts as the mouthpiece for Stone's conviction that it is more important to understand the forces who stood to gain from Kennedy's assassination than to know who pulled the trigger(s).

Neither film approaches the disturbing vision of Pakula's earlier venture into conspiratorial territory, *The Parallax View*. Though loosely based on the Kennedy assassination, *The Parallax View* creates a fictional conspiracy scenario more insidious than anything yet dreamed up by the US secret services. The investigator here is Joe Frady (Warren Beatty), a reporter who witnesses the murder of a presidential candidate. As the other witnesses gradually vanish in a series of unexplained accidents, Beatty sets out to investigate their deaths and discovers the Parallax Corporation, an organisation which trains psychologically maladjusted individuals to become political assassins. In order to penetrate the organisation, Joe fakes the characteristics of a potential killer, becoming short-tempered, irrational and violent. While there's no doubt this is just play-acting, he slips into the role with unsettling ease. We are a long way here from the moral certainties of Oliver Stone.

The Parallax View is a conspiracy thriller shot through a dark lens, with Beatty, whose methods are a far cry from the clean-cut heroism of Redford's Woodward, as the classic *noir* investigator moving down shadowy corridors in search of the truth, only to be confronted with the barrel of a gun. Throughout the film, the audience is allowed to know slightly more than Joe, increasing the sense of his isolation as the corporation moves in. This Hitchcockian strategy is much more sinister than the didactic simplicity of *JFK* and *All the President's Men*, where we are led through the maze knowing exactly as much – or as little – as the protagonists. And the film's ending is pessimistic about the chances of defeating the forces of darkness:



Clean white space: Redford and Hoffman seek the light of truth in 'All the President's Men', top; **Redford, on his dark way to meet a voice,** bottom



Speak no evil: Warren Beatty moving towards darkness in 'The Parallax View'

when Joe discovers that another assassination is being planned, he attempts to stop it, but his cover has been blown. So the killing goes ahead, and Joe is shot dead at the scene and named as the assassin.

While Stone's priority in *JFK* is to achieve the highest degree of 'realism' in telling the Kennedy story, Pakula in *The Parallax View* is engaged in a light-touch reflection on the manipulative power of cinema. Joe is indoctrinated into Parallax by being placed in front of a cinema screen and shown a montage of images (from smiling children to wartime atrocities) juxtaposed with words like 'home' and 'happiness'. At first the images correspond to the appropriate words, but then in a disjunction of which Godard would have been proud, they become jumbled, so that, for example, happiness is followed by a picture of a corpse. With its grasp of the potential link between political and formal fragmentation – how all one's assumptions about the way things work can be placed in jeopardy – *The Parallax View* nears the sophistication of what is perhaps the ultimate modernist conspiracy thriller: Francis Ford Coppola's *The Conversation*.

The Conversation centres on an enigmatic surveillance expert, Harry Caul (Gene Hackman), who is sent to record a meeting between a man and a woman in a crowded square. While deciphering his tapes, Harry comes across what he thinks is a plot by his boss to murder the couple. Against all his professional principles, he decides to intervene, but the results are not what he expects.

Released in 1974, *The Conversation* appears to be the epitome of post-Watergate conspiracy movies, though in fact Coppola started writing it in the late 60s and its strongest influences are the European art movies of that era – most famously, Antonioni's *Blow-Up*. Coppola takes a basic unit of cinema – a dialogue between a man and a woman – and subjects it to an extended, self-reflexive meditation. The scene is 'shot' from three different points of view, and Harry spends most of the movie trying to edit these together into a seamless reproduction – just like a film editor cutting together different shots into a single scene.

Finally, Harry discovers what he thinks is the key – a single line: "He'd kill us if he got the chance". He bugs the hotel room where he believes the murder will take place and sure enough hears screams. Bursting into the room, he finds nothing – until he flushes the toilet,

which overflows with a sea of blood. But contrary to Harry's belief, it is not the couple who have been killed, but the director of the company he is working for, whom the couple were plotting to kill all along. The crucial line of dialogue was "He'd kill us if he got the chance" rather than "He'd kill us if he got the chance".

The Conversation's sophisticated use of deconstruction puts it at the opposite end of the spectrum from Oliver Stone's exercise in reconstruction. While *JFK* presents itself as a legal case leading inexorably to a single conclusion, *The Conversation* shows how easy it is to get it wrong once one enters the world of conspiracy. The star exhibit in the case made by Garrison (and Stone) is the amateur footage shot by Abraham Zapruder, which shows Kennedy's last moments with the awful verisimilitude of a home movie. But though this footage (said to provide decisive evidence that shots were fired from the grassy knoll) is the holy object of all Kennedy conspiracy theorists, *The Conversation* shows us how it might better be approached: as a single, imperfect representation which can be made to mean whatever we want it to mean.

Perhaps the most extraordinary thing about Coppola's film is its protagonist. Ultra-paranoid, Harry is an unsavoury creature of the security underworld. But it is his very complicity in this world that makes his change of heart so effective. Starting as an Olympian observer of the activities of ordinary mortals (as seen in the famous bird's-eye view which opens the film), he ends up trapped in his own apartment, frantically tearing down the walls in an effort to find the surveillance devices he believes are implanted there. Ultimately, Harry represents the pathology which accompanies the conspiratorial mentality – obsessive secrecy, a conviction that the smallest detail is part of a larger pattern, and a paranoid belief that all opposition is rooted in hidden motives.

The conspiracy movie, then, is clearly capable of many permutations. The 'heroic quest'



The never-ending story: Gene Hackman in 'The Conversation' moves from suspicious involvement, top, to devastated victim, bottom

model offers optimistic conclusions about the ultimate re-establishment of moral order, whereas the pessimistic modernists opt for no happy endings and an enduring ambiguity about where the moral high ground lies.

But as in the best conspiracist's tradition, there is a pattern here, and the key lies in Oliver Stone's favourite subject: the 60s. For while Stone adheres to a misty-eyed view that it might all have been different were it not for the death of one man, the film-makers of the mid-70s were less sanguine. Coming off the back of a series of crushing defeats to counter-cultural ideals – from Vietnam to Watergate – it was far from clear by the 70s that justice would be done. Both Beatty's Joe and Hackman's Harry end up as victims of the very conspiracies they seek to uncover, while even *All the President's Men* hints that Woodward and Bernstein's investigation is only the beginning.

In formal terms, the modernist leanings of these films emerge directly from their political pessimism. Explicitly aware of genre conventions, Pakula reworked the moral and formal ambiguities of 40s *film noir* to fit a new era of uncertainty, while Coppola tipped his hat to the *nouvelle vague* in a profoundly American tale of bluff and double-bluff. Stone's purpose, by contrast, is to present a simple story of a political cover-up. Barraged with MTV-style rapid-fire montages, deafened by John Williams' melodramatic score and hammered into submission by Garrison's relentless statement of the obvious ("I can't believe they killed him because he wanted to change things"), the audience is in no danger of missing the point. Placed next to its sophisticated precursors, *JFK* displays a remarkable naivety about cinema's ability to present 'the truth'.

The last word on this subject belongs to perhaps the most knowing modernist chronicler of the 60s – Thomas Pynchon. In *Vineland*, his brilliant satire of the counter-culture and its legacy, Pynchon follows a group of hippy radicals from the late 60s to the present day.

Setting out to use film as a weapon in the class war, the self-styled media guerrillas find themselves increasingly seduced by the temptations of the medium, and become obsessed with capturing events 'as they really happen' to the point where one of them is killed on camera. At the same time, unknown to the group, one of their female members has started having an affair with an FBI agent. United in their love for secrecy and conspiracy, this unlikely couple manage to round up most of the group into government re-programming camps.

Pynchon's vision of a bond between the radical underground and their establishment foes hits on a startling proposition – that the opposite sides ended up feeding off each other's desires and nightmares. And this is where Pynchon offers a devastating critique of Stone's position: that the ideals of the 60s failed not because of a president's death, but because both sides were caught up in a zero-sum game of paranoia politics. Obsession with the power of the camera and the activities of 'the man' can only lead to a fatal attraction.

The eye and its
discontents:
Vertov's 'The Man
with a Movie Camera'
is unusual among
documentary films in
making the activity of
film-making a subject
in the film, below;
Vertov, on location,
bottom right



● The documentary remains unique among the major genres for the relative poverty of the critical work it has inspired. Indeed, given the decisive role played by directors of documentary, or what would now be called 'docu-drama', in the early development of serious film criticism – Dziga Vertov, Sergei Eisenstein, John Grierson, Paul Rotha, Pare Lorentz – the expulsion of non-fiction film to the margins of critical debate is remarkable. One might have expected that the polemics about the nature and conditions of artistic realism which enlivened film studies a decade or so ago would have led to the rediscovery of the genre as an area of fundamental theoretical importance, but nothing of the sort took place. As a result, documentary criticism (what there is of it) has been almost entirely unaffected by the engagement with questions of ideology, representation and point of view which proved so fruitful in the analysis of popular fictional film.

The first critical problem is to define in what ways, exactly, documentaries differ from works of fiction. That there is a difference no one will dispute: the basic materials of the genre are the givens of a real historical world which exists independently of its representation. At the same time, however, it is possible to take the obvious too much for granted, for the documentarist plainly endows these materials with a form – which is, more often than not, the form of a narrative – and intervenes more or less actively, and more or less consciously, in the 'real events' which he or she has undertaken to 'record'.

Whatever particular directors (and even some of their human subjects) may like to claim, the presence of the camera is an intervention in itself, and both filming and editing inescapably entail active processes of selection, organisation and evaluation which are in principle no different from those involved in creating a fiction film. In some cases, the director's intervention is such that the distinction between 'fiction' and 'non-fiction' seems scarcely worth making. The Nazi rally in *Triumph of the Will* (1936) was staged with a view to Leni Riefenstahl filming it; the Aran islanders had long abandoned the practice of hunting basking sharks when Robert Flaherty turned up, but he persuaded them to revive it because he assumed (correctly) that it would provide him with striking footage. Here, and in

many other cases, the idea of 'documentary' amounts to little more than a spurious impression of authenticity which naturalises a particular perspective on the represented world.

This 'documentary effect' has its basis in the peculiar, and potentially deeply deceptive, relationship between the photographic image and the section of reality which was in front of the camera when the photograph was taken. The photograph's undoubted immediacy and (all other things being equal) accuracy creates the impression of a neutral medium, and we tend to assume – unless we receive some definite signal to the contrary – that our reaction to photographs is determined directly by their content rather than by the context in which they have been placed and the point of view in relation to them which the photograph constructs. We now laugh complacently at anecdotes about the susceptibility of early cinema audiences to the illusion of reality created by the Lumière Programme, but any sense of superiority we may feel to the simple souls who thought the train was coming out of the screen is ill-advised.

The main interest of the first public film show is that it embodies ideologies about the family, class and work in such a way that they do not appear as ideologies at all, but as inherent properties of objects, persons and actions in the real world. And in our own culture, the reporting on television of what we know as 'news' and 'nature' – the most widely consumed forms of documentary – continues to be determined by the same art. We may not believe that the bombs in downtown Dubrovnik will blow us up, or

that the killer whale will come crashing into the living room, but however insistently the personality of Peter Sissons intrudes, or however tendentious David Attenborough's commentary becomes, our readiness to overlook the surreptitious ideological encoding of the 'documentary' image is such that we readily continue to believe that the images we are seeing do not actively represent reality, but are to all intents and purposes identifiable with it.

Even when attention is drawn to the process of representation – as in the spin-off documentary about the making of *The Trials of Life* – the emphasis falls not on the rhetorical and narrative strategies employed, but on the technical marvel of 'how-it-was-done' and the ingenuity or courage involved in doing it. The images themselves, in that they are felt to correspond to nature, leave nothing to be explained. The equivalent processes in the coverage of social and political events are, of course, much more insidious and dangerous. Television reportage systematically employs the immediacy of the 'documentary effect' to substantiate discourses about reality which are mystified, partial and often simply false, but which seem to be plausible because the reality in question is being photographed 'as it happens'.

All the unique artistic and political problems of documentary film-making arise from this mythical notion, deeply rooted in the social history of photography, that photographs can give us unmediated access to, and objective knowledge of, what they show. In so far as the early theorists and practitioners of the documentary become aware of the problems at all, their response is confused and question-begging. Grierson, having taken the common sense distinction between fiction and non-fiction for granted, boldly identifies the former with 'artifice', which is in turn identified either with an effete aestheticism (*vide* his notorious strictures on the work of Sternberg) or with simple misrepresentation. The essence of the documentary, by contrast, is the rejection of 'artifice', and Grierson sometimes goes so far as to suggest that because photography makes it possible to record images of an existing social world, fiction is a misuse (or at least trivialising use) of film as a medium. This argument may seem merely grotesque today, but we should remember that ►



What is a documentary?, asks Andrew Britton, as he looks at examples from 'The Man with a Movie Camera' to 'Trials of Life'

Invisible eye

◀ contemporary thinkers who were both very much more radical and very much more sophisticated than Grierson were developing ideas which are remarkably similar to it.

One of the central theses of Walter Benjamin's 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' is that photography has an intrinsic capacity to demystify the represented world. By means of a tortuous misappropriation of Brechtian dramatic theory, Benjamin finds himself able to assert that film, by virtue of its technique alone, can produce effects equivalent to the Brechtian practice of distancing. Benjamin's and Grierson's arguments are crucially different, in that Grierson seems to believe that film can simply *show* reality, whereas Benjamin wishes to advance the larger claim that this showing is, in its essence, a *critical* activity. However, both assume that the representation of the world through photography is continuous with the revelation of the truth about it.

Like Grierson, Soviet documentarist Dziga Vertov developed an aesthetic based on the idea that the documentary was both more truthful and more politically responsible than fiction. He also shared with Benjamin (and with other Soviet film-makers) the belief that montage made it possible to represent the truth of reality through a process of fragmentation and reassembly. His work is strikingly unlike Grierson's, however, in its concern with the foregrounding of film as a medium, and in his most famous film, *The Man with a Movie Camera* (1928), the activity of film-making is as much the subject of the narrative as the day-in-the-life-of-a-great-city which the protagonist is recording. No film goes further out of its way to remind us that the images we are seeing are the product of a complex process of selection and manufacture and that they embody a specific point of view, but the crucial problem is that this point of view is conceived of entirely in technological terms. We cannot fail to be aware that the narrative world has been constructed by the film-maker, but *The Man with a Movie Camera* has not a word to say about its own value system.

It could be argued, indeed, that the interminable facetious self-referentiality of the film is as mystifying in its way as the pretence in (for example) Flaherty's *Industrial Britain* (1931), that the images are merely transparent, and that both works are committed, for ideological reasons, to egregious misrepresentations of working-class life. Each film presents us with a world of industrial labour (one capitalist, the other putatively socialist) from which any trace of exploitation, alienation, oppression or struggle has been eliminated, and in which the labour of the manufacturing proletariat is falsely identified either with the craftsmanship of the self-employed, pre-industrial artisan (*Industrial Britain*) or with the free creative play of the autonomous artist (*The Man with a Movie Camera*). Grierson and Flaherty preserve a tactful silence about the Great Depression, which was at its height when *Industrial Britain* was made; Vertov does not problematise his film's point of view so far as to draw attention to the momentous struggle around the question of 'socialist development'

Staging reality: whose interests do documentaries serve? Both 'Night Mail', top, and 'Triumph of the Will', centre, celebrate 30s national culture;

Franju's 'Hôtel des Invalides', bottom, is a radically different film, pushing the spectator outwards beyond the frame to a determining history



NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE (2)



which was taking place between the Stalinist faction in the Bolshevik Party and the Left Opposition throughout the 20s. Both films are brazenly ideological, but in each case the 'documentary effect' acts as a form of camouflage. Certainly, *The Man with a Movie Camera* provides incontrovertible evidence of the inadequacy of any concept of artistic point of view as a *formal* category that fails to take account of point of view as an interpretive activity.

The cherished notion of documentary truth survived the dominant (though not exclusive) development of the genre in the period between the wars as a medium of propaganda, often sponsored directly by the state. This development explains the chauvinist coloration of so many documentaries of the 20s, 30s and the Second World War: the reality recorded, and hyperbolically extolled, in *Night Mail* (Harry Watt, Basil Wright, 1936) and *The River* (Lorentz, 1937), *Triumph of the Will* and *One Sixth of the Earth* (Vertov, 1926) *Berlin: Symphony of a City* (Walter Ruttmann, 1927) and *Industrial Britain* is that of a specific national culture. (Flaherty's rhapsodies to various 'primitive' communities are obvious exceptions to this pattern, but as *Industrial Britain* shows, he was perfectly prepared to approach contemporary capitalism in the same spirit.) There is no easy transition from the idea of documentary truth to the actual practice of promoting particular ideologies (or even policies); but we find again and again that the contradiction is resolved (when it is noticed) by reference to the genre's educational value. If fiction films distract, bemuse and mystify, it is the virtue of the documentary to promulgate enlightened social attitudes appropriate to the real nature of the real world in which the audience lives. Soviet montage theory, much of which depends philosophically on the proposition that montage can dramatise the dialectic of reality itself, could easily be adapted to underwrite the hypothesis that documentary truth and Soviet (or Stalinist) truth were synonymous; Grierson, arriving by a different route at the same destination, came to believe that the purpose of the documentary was to inculcate the virtues of "responsible citizenship".

Once it has been accepted that there can be no such thing as a representation of the world which does not embody a set of values, it follows that the documentary's greatest strength is its availability for the purposes of analysis and ideological critique. The essential precondition for the realisation of this strength is systematic resistance to the illusion of transparency – a point ignored by so many works which purport to be devastating indictments of the world's abuses but continue to naturalise both their own discourse and the target of their polemic.

Frederick Wiseman's series of films about repressive institutions exemplifies this tendency. In *The Titicut Follies* (1967), Wiseman exposes us remorselessly to the brutality and indignity inflicted on the inhabitants of an asylum for the criminally insane, and Wiseman, who does everything in his power to cause the spectator the maximum possible degree of distress, clearly imagines himself to be saying that the state of

affairs which his film has exposed is deplorable. Unfortunately, this attitude of savage indignation is compromised by a method of representation which makes the world of the asylum seem both incomprehensible and unalterable, and which is, indeed, sadistically complicit with the oppressive regime itself. The camera's apparently neutral gaze gives the impression that we are simply being shown what is there, and the film asserts implicitly that its truthfulness is guaranteed by the fact that it is so painful to watch. This pretence of objectivity and refusal to allow the spectator to relate the asylum to anything outside it, combine to transform a social institution, created for explainable reasons (however misguided) and which might in principle be changed, into a terrestrial inferno, as inexplicable as it is monstrous. To protest against the reality constructed by *The Titicut Follies* seems as pointless as objecting to the consequences of a cyclone or earthquake, and the film does nothing more than visit on the spectator the experience of helplessness imposed on the asylum's inmates by their guards.

The example of *The Titicut Follies* reveals, by contrast, the two defining characteristics of truly great documentaries. In the first place, great documentaries are analytical, in the sense that they present the corner of reality with which they deal not as a truth there to be observed, but as a social and historical reality which can only be understood in the context of the forces and actions that produced it. Secondly, they are engaged, in the sense that they lay no claim to objectivity, but actively present a case through their structure and organisation of point of view.

Buñuel's *Land without Bread* (1932) and Georges Franju's *Hôtel des Invalides* (1951) are obvious examples. The power of these works derives from the fact that their subject is not fictional and their raw material is highly particularised: a remote area of pre-revolutionary Spain in Buñuel's film; a single building in Paris in Franju's. Without blurring the clarity of their focus, the two directors use the concrete details of the world with which they have chosen to deal as the point of departure for an analytical discourse which leads the spectator outwards, to the larger historical processes which have determined those aspects of reality that can be photographed. This exemplary procedure undercuts the workings of what I have called the 'documentary effect', in that every detail of the representation reminds us that the reality of what is shown is embedded in other kinds of reality (such as class relations) which are not filmable. Both works are partisan – Buñuel makes no bones about his objections to private property nor Franju about his to imperialism – but neither can be said to make a political statement. On the contrary, their politics are expressed by dramatic means, through an engagement with the details of narrative form and point of view which is as much a part of documentary film-making as of fiction. With their combination of analytical rigour, formal audacity and ideological trenchancy, *Land without Bread* and *Hôtel des Invalides* provide models from which we have much to learn.

Disturbing wishes

More biased and exuberant documentaries are what television documentary film-maker Roger Bolton would like to see

A challenge. Name five present-day British television documentary-makers. A more difficult challenge. Name five present-day British television documentary-makers whose films you enjoy watching and whose programmes you would stay in for. The writer pauses, he can just answer the first question; the second defeats him.

Does it matter? Perhaps not in the area of so-called 'factual' programmes, where the audience has become more aware of how material can be shaped, tweaked and distorted. And whereas once we would listen to the great men of television – Cooke, Clarke, Bronowski, Cameron – telling us about other continents, now we doubt the coffee-table approach, are aware of the cultural prisms through which we view. We are more conscious of manipulation. Perhaps, too, the world has become too serious and television too mature for the style to blind us to slightness of content. And yet if Ken Russell or Alan Parker ever makes another TV doc I will be there, only partly out of nostalgia.

Perhaps in these names lies a clue to the absence of contemporary television 'names', for if any director does demonstrate an arresting command of the form, it's off to the world of feature films and Hollywood, there to waste time by the poolside or, occasionally, to make a movie. Most likely the director will depart these shores talking of artistic integrity and radicalism and end up shooting a violent and sexually coarse thriller.

Occasionally a star arises like Peter Kosminsky, once of Yorkshire TV's *First Tuesday* series. When he made his first film, with me at *Nationwide*, it was evident that he was very talented. His films on the Falklands War and Afghanistan were exceptional, but soon he was taking that stepping stone to feature films – and then to drama documentaries. So now, after *Shoot to Kill*, it is *Wuthering Heights*. (Though I have to confess to having commissioned drama documentaries myself, like *The Treaty*, about the setting-up of the Irish free state.) Peter's departure is a sad loss for television, for there are few Kosminskys about. An ageing hack like myself might see it as a result of the drying-up of the nursery slopes: no *Tonights*,

no *Nationwides*, just news, news, and more news.

Whatever the reason, there are some awful documentaries being made. The fact that many are underfunded means that many are also overextended: it is difficult to go abroad for less than forty minutes. With four channels, there are more documentaries being made than in the 60s and 70s, but with significantly less impact. We get to more places, but travel lighter. Access widens the agenda but does not necessarily deepen it. One yearns for the polished professionalism of an Eddie Mirzoeff, demonstrated in films with John Betjeman such as *Metroland*.

Crime pays, of course, in factual television as much as in drama. At Thames, I've been responsible for *Flying Squad* and the upcoming *Murder Squad*. It would be hypocritical of me not to acknowledge the pleasure their audience figures gave (will give?) me. A society is often viewed most revealingly through its garbage. But am I alone in thinking that we have reached saturation point with crime on television?

Apparently not. Marcus Plantin, the director of programmes for LWT, promises more 'reality' programmes. No company ever went bust copying the worst of American television and such reality programming can become simply a compression of violent incidents and emotional outbursts. Some important documentary areas flourish, however, though here again I betray my bias.

Major series like *The Second Russian Revolution*, *The Making of Europe*, *The Longest Hatred*, *LBJ*, *The Nuclear Age*, *Stalin*, all demonstrate the willingness of broadcasters to finance difficult subject matter with budgets disproportionate to the size of audience. At least until now. All are the product of relentless determination and commitment by public service broadcasters. Will ITV's new central scheduler appreciate those virtues?

And the venerable current affairs programmes like *World in Action* and *This Week* are not only vindicated by the release of those who were unjustly imprisoned and the exposure of wrongdoing, but also by the audiences they can still attract – between 5 and 8 million.

Panorama, perhaps because it often abandons good storytelling and employs inexperienced directors, stumbles behind – for the moment. Sometimes it hits the jackpot, as with its prescient report into the Max(well) Factor, and the Terry Waite affair. Too often, however, the programme offers the extended news analysis already provided by the news and *Newsnight* often weeks before. Such analysis rarely enthalls.

It is ironic, then, that this 'successful' area of documentary-making is at risk. Under the new Channel 3 arrangements, current affairs is no longer mandatory in peaktime. And out of peak, resources dwindle, and ambition and confidence can go as well. A documentary can be good, and popular, and at its best can educate as well as entertain. So why not risk it, rather than another predictable sitcom or an embarrassing factual entertainment?

There are two further dangers. The first is the increasing proportion of co-productions. These can be successful, as in some of the examples I mentioned earlier, but they are sought as much because of underfunding as because of ambition. To be co-producible, a series needs to be international in scope. This can be a good thing, but it also means that local subject matter will not have equivalent resources. The expensive domestic documentary series is a contradiction in terms.

The other danger is the increasingly heavily enforced concept of impartiality in British broadcasting. While I support this in news and current affairs, its rigid enforcement elsewhere can mean a dreadful narrowing of the agenda and the exclusion of the provocative, infuriating but vital individual voice. If I have one wish for 1992, it is that I may again see something as gloriously biased and exuberant as Alan Parker's *Turnip Head's Guide to the Cinema*. Another wish is to see Kenneth Griffiths' *Hang Out Your Brightest Colours* – long banned – transmitted. I would even welcome a Paul Johnson polemic – he has said that "The BBC not only rapes – it rapes for Russia" and I'd like to watch him try to prove it.

Deceiving an audience is unforgivable, but disturbing and delighting are essential. Let us have a little mischief.

Lectureship in Film Studies Cultural Studies

UEA
NORWICH

Applications are invited for a permanent lectureship in the interdisciplinary School of English and American Studies, to teach on the MA and the undergraduate Film Studies programmes and contribute to related Cultural Studies programmes. Preference will be given to applicants with research and teaching interests in American cinema history, and at least one of the following areas : television, feminist theory, cultural studies. The post is available from 1 September 1992.

Salary will be on the Lecturer A scale in the range £12,860 to £17,827 per annum.

Applications (three copies) which should include a full curriculum vitae and the exact date of birth, together with the names and addresses of three persons to whom reference may be made, should be lodged with the Administrative Secretary, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ (telephone 0603 592734) from whom further particulars may be obtained, quoting reference EAS 92/01 not later than 21 February 1992

No forms of application are issued.

UEA is an Equal Opportunities Employer

6th International Animation Film Festival Stuttgart'92

During these six days of the festival animation films from different countries and continents will be shown. One of the main attraction will be a overview about the British and resent Soviet animation film. The festival of Stuttgart is an unique event in the Federal Republic of Germany. Our aim is to create a forum with particular focus on latest animation films, to demonstrate new developments and tendencies of animation film generally, to build up a good contact between film makers and the audience, and to bring close the different aspects of animation film to a greater public.

Informations, tickets,
accreditation:

**International Animation
Film Festival Stuttgart**

Teckstrasse 56,

D - 7000 Stuttgart 1

Tel.: (0)711 - 2622699

Fax: (0)711 - 2624980

20.3. - 25.3.



**International
EXPERTS IN TRAVEL PACKAGES
TO FILM FESTIVALS
FOR THE GROUP AND INDEPENDENT
TRAVELLER: LEISURE OR BUSINESS**

TOURS FOR 1992:

Berlin (February)

Hong Kong (April)

San Francisco (April/May)

Telluride, Colorado (September)

Chicago (October)

Havana (December)

FOR BROCHURE CONTACT:
FESTIVAL TOURS INTERNATIONAL LTD.
96 PROVIDENCE LANE
LONG ASHTON, BRISTOL BS18 9DN

**24 HOUR BROCHURE HOTLINE:
tel/fax: 0275-392953**

SCRIPTWRITING Short Courses

A Practical Dynamic Introduction to All Aspects of Writing for Film & Television:

- How to write for (and sell to) major studios, especially Hollywood.
- Assembling the Story / Finding the Structure.
- Workshop sessions / film & script analysis / script layout.
- Learn by doing : complete a full length movie script during the course.
- Script mechanics: time locks, reversals, complications etc.
- Building suspense / visual dynamics of the film story and much, much more.....

From 1991 students:

"This is the most effective and inspirational course I have come across - it is practical, exciting and extremely well structured"
Rene Gordon

"An invaluable course to the beginning screenwriter"

James Hendrie, Oscar winning Director;
comedy writer SPITTING IMAGE, LENNY HENRY SHOW,
MURDER MOST HORRID.

"If you're serious about becoming a screenwriter, start by doing this course. The Screenwise method is an absolutely essential first step, especially if you want that edge over the rest"

Leslie Ahm, Script Consultant, PALACE PICTURES.

Courses begin March 1992. Send for free brochure, Screenwise International, 9 Chester Mews, Belgravia, London SW1X 7AJ or phone 071 582 7998 Mon-Fri 9a.m.-6p.m. and Sat 10a.m. -5p.m.

Tainted histories

What do I look for in a film? It goes without saying that one admires performance as in the genius of Laurence Olivier or Peggy Ashcroft, sensitive direction, finely handled camera work – but I tend to meditate on something else, some intuitive proportion that lurks within the film and may not necessarily be consistent with the film-maker's conscious intention.

Take *The Third Man* and *Secret Ceremony*. I could mention others, but these films spring to mind as examples of intuitive dimensionality. Orson Welles makes a brief but unforgettable figural entry within the frame of *The Third Man* as if trailing ghosts in his wake. He embodies something curiously spectral yet concrete. The spectrality of his fleeting march to perdition – as though a mask erupts then dissolves into shadow – invokes a linkage between his callous, secret exploitation of vulnerable children and the bewildered friend from past days, played by Joseph Cotten, who comes in search of him.

Cotten inadvertently opens a door into a chasm which reveals itself on two levels – one in the underground sewer through which Welles flees, the other upon a lofty platform above the city where Welles appears to brood upon thrusting his friend into mid-air. Here is the counterpoint and ingredient of marvel though – so tainted and poisoned – it becomes the utterly perverse mechanics of psyche.

It is true that the era which the film portrays was addicted to the cynical exploitation of individuals and masses. Whatever changes have happened across the decades, something of that brutal shadow remains to serve an enlightenment that sees a cynical adjustment to the horror of world events as perfectly natural. Drama and film are inevitably affected by this. And yet one may still glimpse another dimension through and beyond appearances. Let me return to the link between spectrality and dimensionality. Tainted, yes, but it arouses a sensation in me of something missed or lost or negated, something bruised, abused, within ourselves, but still there to open a wholly different apprehension of the blend between the vulnerable creature and the elusive foundations of marvel.

The famous biologist Jacques Monod tells us that "every living being is also a fossil". I quote him but I interpret his finding in a meta-fictional light that differs from his atheism: the light of an interchange of visible and invisible proportions within the numinosity and investitures of the living fossil.

As a young man I travelled in the rainforests of South America. I was told of a bird that carried in its wing a subtle bone or vestige of the dinosaur. In one sense therefore it mirrored a spectre within itself. At another level it was absolute and oblivious of what it was kin to. I too could vanish with my humankind yet a witness



FABER AND FABER

In 'The Third Man' and 'Secret Ceremony', the novelist Wilson Harris looks for signs of what we have lost or denied – and what may be redeemed

to my species would occupy in the future a shape I cannot foresee to incarnate a visible/invisible connectedness to past.

Such incarnation implies I feel a series of innermost stepping stones through the self and beyond the self into the remote past and the distant future. The marvel of such proportions, such infinite participation, rests paradoxically upon a creative and re-creative response to the play of partial imageries backwards and forwards, forwards and backwards again within the language of the imagination.

This brief foray into the rainforests of my youth may throw some light upon the theme I am pursuing in this article.

Perhaps the art of film will change unpredictably as we move into the 90s. But one has to reckon now it seems to me with a climate of conviction that acknowledges the partial image but flattens it simultaneously upon the surfaces of existence. Surface is all that there is and where various ruses of dream are employed they are a reduction of mythical truth into a package of tricks. Truth's function is to become a medium for the revelation of tricks. The inclination therefore at this time – as I sense it – is to idolise the clarity of the machine, to manufacture reductions of mythical truth into enlightened technique, realistic debunking technique.

And yet the mirroring of truth in trick, trick in truth, creates a grotesque but meaningful resistance I find, a kind of distortion at times as in *Secret Ceremony*. The life of the fossil instils a visionary or revisionary comedy (if comedy it is) into the eye of the camera.

Elizabeth Taylor (who plays the part of a surrogate mother) is approached by a young woman (played by Mia Farrow) who

identifies with her because she resembles or mirrors her mother who is dead. A subconscious resistance to death arrives and her mother is now alive. Elizabeth Taylor also sees in Mia Farrow an unexpected resemblance to a child she has lost. It is their mutual vulnerability that ignites a mother/daughter relationship. Mia Farrow gives a brilliant performance as the child-woman. Is she the spectral child, extinct bird-child, toy-child (alive nevertheless), hopping, peering through the mask of adolescent woman?

Every ritual ornament, garment, morsel they share or bestow upon each other picks up I find that perverse yet potentially numinous resistance to absolute identity. So does the exotic mansion in Addison Road, London – with its impressionistic, fantasy atmosphere even as it is a relic of an imperial age – into which the younger woman takes the older. I lived with my wife Margaret in Addison Road for many years. We used to pass the great house and wonder what it was like inside. *Secret Ceremony* led us in.

Likewise there is the hotel beside the sea, the beach, the arrival of the itinerant lecher that Robert Mitchum plays who succeeds in poisoning surrogate mother's affections for her newfound daughter. The sophisticated lecher is stabbed to death in the end by the nemesis figure that the mother becomes. She sees through his criminality, his incestuous guilt, his avuncular and long-suffering pretensions. But it is too late. The damage has been done. He had persuaded her to abort the secret ceremony in which her protégée ties a toy animal to her middle and dresses herself up in bulging fashion as if she is pregnant.

That grotesque bulge is I think the curious watershed of the film. It offers me a tenuous borderline between two spheres. This is not the imaginative intention of the film I am sure, which by now is wholly preoccupied by states of derangement. Yet an intuitive doubling remains that allows me to accept on one hand – in one sphere – all the trappings of a game or trick whereas on the other my inner eye visualises an impure yet paradoxically chaste child-woman and her predilection for action and mystery as if she becomes a living ornament in a loveless world which seeks to unlock its/her sanction of malaise through lost and found animate/inanimate parts of herself, fossil generations.

In settling for one sphere alone when she debunks the trick the surrogate mother makes equally void in herself the spectral burden of kinship she had accepted. It is easy to misjudge the intricate balance between tainted histories, tainted familiars, and saving truth. To debunk the mystery – mysterious virgin pregnancy or animal, intangible seed of divinity and vice versa – is to succumb to a cynical enlightenment which may destroy rather than heal.



RONALD GRANT

Mutual vulnerability: Mia Farrow and Elizabeth Taylor in 'Secret Ceremony'

In the news

Brian Winston

The Media Show: The Changing Face of the News, 1985-1990

Edwin Diamond, The MIT Press, \$26.95, 230pp

The constant mental effort involved in correcting and contextualising the flow of half-processed info-bits that is American television news finally got too much for me as the Berlin Wall fell. But, I am happy to report, Ed Diamond has more patience. He is still watching.

In *The Media Show*, Diamond, a journalism professor at New York University, collects twenty-three of his occasional pieces, many written for *New York Magazine*, on the state of television news in the US during the second half of the 80s. The result lacks the weight of some of his other work – *The Spot*, for instance, remains the last word on political commercials. But this book is still useful as a set of snapshots of the era when CNN came into its own and the networks acquired new budget-slashing, staff-decimating corporate owners.

Diamond belongs to a particular American tradition of press criticism epitomised by A. J. Liebling's writing for *The New Yorker* which, after forty years, endures as classic insider reflections on how US journalism functions and ought to function. Diamond, despite the professorship, is also an insider. A newspaper and news magazine professional of great distinction, he is now a full-time news junkie of heroic proportions.

Diamond's position on the news media is straightforward: "There are just a few ways to do good journalism, and many ways to do bad journalism". And he is at his best in *The Media Show* when illuminating just how bad bad journalists can be. He does not admire the networks, for instance, for having taken three mealy-mouthed years to tell the public that anal intercourse was a critical factor in Aids transmission. He demonstrates how modern television technology can "create a momentum when nothing may be happening", inflating and distorting the significance of an event. He finds television diplomacy "sappy" and "dumb", as when an anchor asked a terrorist leader: "Any final words to President Reagan this morning?" He also dislikes journalists who subscribe to moral panics and includes some revealing case studies on the phoney 'crack epidemic' story and other hysterical tales involving race, class and crime.

Diamond comes down hard, too, on the new managers – on those, for instance, who thought the answer to declining network news ratings was the elevation of the demagogues who normally inhabit the margins of the broadcasting system. These same "suits" wiped out fifteen per cent of

one show's audience by hiring younger anchors. Diamond delivers such criticisms with great good humour and tact. Faced with the ineptitude of CNN, he mentions only that network's unremarkable level of news writing.

Diamond is not a theorist. Ideological bias, agenda-setting functions or the construction of reality are beyond his ken. All he wants is better TV news. So although he makes use of some media sociology, he is basically a reporter, watching the story and talking to the players. When the examples are graphic and the lessons to be drawn from them clear, the book is insightful. It is at its weakest when Diamond muses more generally.

Mexican epiphany

Ian Christie

Mexico According to Eisenstein

Inga Karetnikova in collaboration with Leon Steinmetz, University of New Mexico Press, \$20, 200pp

This handsome book is the record of a tragic love affair. When Sergei Eisenstein reached Mexico in December 1930, fourteen whirlwind months after leaving Moscow, he found "the place I had been looking for all my life". Mexico seemed to offer all that was lacking in his Soviet existence. Here he could climb the thousand-year-old pyramids of Yucatan and dream of the Mayan empire, swoop dangerously low in a plane over the crater of Popocatepetl, re-stage the romance of revolution far from Stalin's censorious intervention, or sit in "desolate tropical villages" with women silently sorting pumpkins.

The justification for this idyll was an unlikely plan hatched after six months of stalemate between Eisenstein and Paramount. Upton Sinclair, the Californian socialist writer, offered to finance Eisenstein and his two colleagues to make

a film in Mexico – in Ivor Montagu's view, probably to score a pro-Soviet point over Hollywood. It ended in mutual recrimination fifteen months later, with 175,000 feet of material (described by Sinclair himself as "gorgeous beyond all telling") denied to Eisenstein and gradually dispersed in a scattering of makeshift 'documentary' productions.

This was one of the great tragedies of cinema history. It scarred Eisenstein for life; but his experiences in Mexico remained with him, illuminating the dark days of Stalin's terror. While there, he returned to his first love, drawing, and continued his research into the fundamentals of cinema begun during the making of *October*. At the same time, he hungrily explored Mexico and filmed a vast fresco of its history and culture. These activities were not incompatible; as he wrote to a friend in Moscow: "Actually the filming, theory and drawing are done in 'relays' so as to keep going at all costs".

Karetnikova and Steinmetz's cursory text reveals no original research and little awareness of contemporary Eisenstein studies – though it does indicate how the memory of Mexico continued to inspire him, influencing a surprising number of scenes and compositions in *Ivan the Terrible* (1944). It is the book's fine illustrations that bring to life this Mexican epiphany. As well as reprinting Eisenstein's poetic 'script' for *Que Viva Mexico!*, together with some of the images that so stunned Sinclair and some evocative production photographs, the authors provide a useful visual context through a selection of the work of the Mexican artists Eisenstein admired – Diego Rivera, José Orozco, David Siqueiros and the master of popular prints, José Posada. And then, of course, there are his own drawings.

The preoccupation in many of these with madonnas, matadors and masks, and with the sacramental and the carnivalesque – spectacularly combined in the Day of the Dead celebrations – raises a number of intriguing questions about different facets of 'the little boy from Riga'. The drawings also reveal with stark simplicity a reverence for "the great wisdom of Mexico about the unity of death and life" which Eisenstein continued to carry with him for the rest of his life.

From Superman to Superbarrio

Christine Tweddle

Memory and Modernity: Popular Culture in Latin America

William Rowe and Vivian Schelling, Verso, £10.95, 243pp

European observers of Latin America tend to focus exclusively on its material poverty and political violence, ignoring the cultural vitality and exuberance of the region. Not so Rowe and Schelling, whose book celebrates the vibrancy and inventiveness

Long live Mexico: the place Eisenstein had been looking for throughout his life



NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE

of popular forms, from salsa to soap opera, carnival to *candomblé*.

Some seventy per cent of Latin Americans now live in cities. The past twenty-five to thirty years have witnessed the mass migration of rural populations to urban areas, a movement which has been accompanied by a reverse flow of urban influences into the countryside. Almost all cultures in Latin America are now mediated to some extent by the city, unsettling boundaries between popular and high culture. Rowe and Schelling ask what effects these changes have on everyday life. Does the destruction of boundaries necessarily mean standardisation and cultural death? Does it bring about a loss of memory in the face of modernity?

In Rowe and Schelling's view, the answer is no – because for them, memory and modernity are not mutually exclusive. It is mistaken to assume that the old has been superseded by the new in Latin America: there has been no linear movement from the pre-modern to the modern. It is a continent in which different time scales, belief systems and histories co-exist; a culture in which hybrid forms and fluid meanings proliferate; a region in which, since the time of the Conquest, European, native American and African societies have cross-fertilised in a process of transculturation, not acculturation.

To see the city as a contaminating force which poisons and eradicates a more authentic rural way of life is, according to Rowe and Schelling, not only nostalgic but absurd. Such an approach ignores the historical reality of Latin America and fails to recognise popular culture as a site of resistance to authority and homogenisation. From the colonial period onwards, tactical obedience has gone hand in hand with pragmatic evasion: "Obedezco pero no cumplo" ("I obey but I don't accept"). The Spaniards soon learned that control of the production of images does not dictate the way these are read or received.

For Rowe and Schelling, the media are not mere conveyors of messages but meeting points for different, often conflicting, ways of remembering and interpreting: sites of negotiation and exchange. To assume otherwise is to underestimate the capacity of popular audiences to produce multilayered, ambiguous and irreverent responses, constantly to appropriate and refashion cultural signs. Rowe and Schelling offer no easy answers. For them, popular culture, in its accommodations and negotiations with the modern, defies ready-made definitions – it is forever in the process of becoming.

Up in flames

Nicolas Kent

The Devil's Candy: 'The Bonfire of the Vanities' Goes to Hollywood

Julie Salamon, Jonathan Cape, £16.99, 420pp

The single claim to distinction of Brian De Palma's *Bonfire of the Vanities* is that it attracted greater critical vitriol than any



How good intentions can go awry: Bruce Willis, Melanie Griffith and Tom Hanks in 'Bonfire of the Vanities'

movie since *Ishtar*. The work he hoped would establish him in Hollywood and the eyes of the world as something more than a gore-meister died a grisly death.

So how did one of the most acclaimed novels of the 80s come to be transformed into one of the most reviled films ever made? In *The Devil's Candy*, Julie Salamon provides as full an answer as we are likely to get, and does so in a commendably compassionate way. Of course, when writing the book, Salamon was unaware that she was chronicling a catastrophe in the making. And unlike the majority of the press, who gloated over the corpse in wise-after-the-event autopsies, she has resisted the temptations of retrospective judgment.

Instead, she follows the example of Lillian Ross, who forty years ago wrote a detailed and lucid account of the making of John Huston's *The Red Badge of Courage*, a film which like *Bonfire* started out with highflown aspirations only to splutter at the box office. Ross' *Picture* is still the best book about the making of a movie, and Salamon's work, fair-minded though it is, falls short of that of her mentor.

In *Picture*, the characters involved are both enlivened and debunked by Ross' laconic wit. In comparison, the *dramatis personae* of *The Devil's Candy* are bland sketches on whom the author refrains from passing comment. Although Ross undoubtedly had richer material to work on – there is probably more journalistic meat in one year of Huston's life than in De Palma's entire career – Salamon does pass up a number of opportunities. For instance, Peter Guber, *Bonfire*'s original producer and one of her more promising protagonists, is described merely as a "master of sizzle".

It is also disappointing that for all the detail about the making of this particular

movie, ultimately we learn little about the workings of Hollywood beyond what we already know: it is a business which loves winners. Ross is more enlightening: in her final chapter we meet Nicholas Schenck – "The real king of the pack", as Huston called him – the man who controlled the purse strings at MGM. Ross conveys his Olympian disdain for the worker ants in his employ so exquisitely that it throws fresh light on everything we have read thus far. It's the final twist in a finely wrought thriller.

Salamon also concludes her book with a reference to a studio overlord: Warner Bros' chairman, Robert Daly, like Schenck, "a taciturn man who avoided publicity". He certainly avoided the author: we have to settle for a bland quote culled from *Variety*. *The Devil's Candy* is an enjoyable account of how good intentions can go drastically awry in Hollywood; but sadly, we never get to meet the devil himself.

Framing national culture

Tony Rayns

Shadows on the Silver Screen: A Social History of Indonesian Film

Salim Said, translated by Toenggoel P. Siagian, The Lontar Foundation, (price unavailable), 154pp

Indonesian Cinema: National Culture on Screen

Karl G. Heider, University of Hawaii Press, £6.95, 158pp

Some years ago at a symposium on Asian cinema, a prominent Indonesian director (his name is invoked in both these books) whispered to me after listening to one of Lino Brocka's vehement attacks on the Marcos regime's cultural policies and film censorship. "Are things really so bad in the Philippines?", he asked. "I think we're much worse off in Jakarta".

Was he right? It's been hard to judge from this side of the world, partly because so few Indonesian movies circulate internationally (nothing at all in this country until Teguh Karya's *November 1828* reached the 1979 London Film Festival, and precious little since), and partly because the coverage of Indonesia in 'international' film guides has been desultory and unreliable. The simultaneous appearance of two accounts of this little-known industry may not stimulate wider distribution for Indonesian films, but these two paperbacks certainly begin to fill the information gap.

Feature film production in what was then the Dutch East Indies began in 1926, when the Dutchman Heuvelandorp and the German Krüger teamed up to shoot *The Enchanted Monkey* (*Loetoeng Kasaroeng*), based on a West Javan legend. Before the end of the decade, their example was being followed by producers from China and India. As in neighbouring Asian countries, it was the ethnic Chinese (who ►

◀ already owned eighty-five per cent of the cinemas screening imported movies) who made the running: the young producer The Teng-Choen made the first Chinese-oriented, Indonesian-language talkie in 1931. And as in Shanghai, culturally adapted imitations of Hollywood movies came to dominate production in the 30s. The Japanese invasion in 1942 put an end to that, closing down the Chinese-run companies and turning over what remained of the industry to the production of propaganda. The good side of the Japanese occupation was that its hostility to the displaced Dutch fostered a nascent Indonesian nationalism, which fed into the war of independence in the late 40s.

Since its rebirth in 1948, Indonesian cinema has been locked into the syndrome that characterises all non-communist Asian film industries: mass-produced, genre-based entertainment movies, many of them copied from hit imports, dominate, while a handful of dedicated individuals struggle to make films which are more relevant to Indonesian culture. This struggle has been hindered rather than helped by botched government efforts to 'support' the film industry, and censorship (political and otherwise) has also got in the way.

Salim Said's brave and useful book (first published in Indonesian a decade ago) is framed as a polemic. Why, he asks, do most Indonesian movies offer no more than second-hand entertainment formulas, and why do they so comprehensively distort the country's ethnic, social and economic realities? Embedded within this is a carefully researched history of the film industry from its origins up to the 80s (the Sinematek, Indonesia's archive, holds no feature made before 1950), with a particularly detailed account of the implications and effects of the failed communist coup of 1965. Said sometimes cites the reactions of other critics, rarely venturing into analytical criticism himself. But he does identify a number of directors whose work he considers at least intermittently "worthwhile": the late Usmar Ismail ("The father of contemporary Indonesian film") and Djameluddin Malik – and, among those now active, Teguh Karya, Slamet Rahardjo, Eros Djarot and a few others. These are precisely the directors whose work has been shown in international festivals in the last decade; Said's call on his government to give them practical aid is obviously well founded.

Karl Heider, who contributes a short foreword to Said's book, is an American professor of anthropology who went to Indonesia to carry out field studies and found himself gathering 'cultural' data when he watched movies and their audiences. He defers respectfully to the auteurs singled out by Said, but focuses on the movies that Said despises and deplores: the pot-boilers beloved of the mass audience. Not surprisingly, he finds these movies (and the audience reactions they elicit) rich in rather obvious cultural specificities – from which he extrapolates the startling conclusion that Indonesian films are deeply Indonesian in their culture



'November 1828', directed by Teguh Karya, below: one of the few Indonesian films to have been in international circulation

ral assumptions. This may well mark a great leap forward for anthropology, but (as Heider seems apologetically aware) it doesn't do much for film criticism. Heider's grasp of cinematic specificity can be measured by the way he notes "nice" camerawork in respect of a film sequence that actually depends on editing. His study contains some entertaining pages on the implications of cross-cultural translations, but it's hard to see for whom the book is written: anthropologists in need of a break from their field studies, perhaps?

To go back to my friend's question, the answer is that film culture has a hard time in all of Asia's developing countries; ambitious film-makers throughout the region face tough political and economic constraints. On balance, it's probably easier right now to make a 'serious' film in Jakarta than in Manila, but there's no short-term prospect of seeing an Indonesian film with the sociological candour of Ishmael Bernal's *Manila by Night* or the political anger of Brocka's *Fight for Us*.

While we're waiting, however, these two books at least help pave the way for a volume on Indonesian cinema which provides an authoritative analysis of what has been achieved by directors like Usmar Ismail and Teguh Karya.

To the market

Graham Murdock

**Advertising International:
The Privatisation of Public Space**
Armand Mattelart, Routledge,
£10.99, 242pp

Armand Mattelart is one of the most prolific and versatile commentators on the communications industries currently writing in French. His interests have ranged widely, from new technologies to Latin American telenovelas; his most influential work has been characterised by a concern with the way that corporate rationales have annexed the symbolic and imaginative life of the late twentieth century. He began to explore this theme in the early 70s, when it was distinctly unfashionable; the initial summary of his researches, *Multinational Corporations and the Control of Culture*, appeared in English in 1979. Although the book went almost unnoticed at the time, history had already started to move in Mattelart's

direction, and by the end of the 80s a decade of privatisation had forced the issue of corporate cultural power to the top of academic and policy agendas.

This latest book examines the consolidation of this power during this decade and tries to tease out its consequences. Mattelart follows many recent writers in identifying the global enthusiasm for market mechanisms and rationales, and the consequent erosion of public institutions, as a decisive turning point. Privatisation and deregulation, he argues, particularly of the television system – the core cultural industry – have opened up enormous new opportunities for corporate intervention and control, organised and orchestrated by the emerging global advertising networks.

Mattelart details the rise of these networks and their moves into the related areas of public relations and image-building. He shows how their strategies and techniques have been applied over an ever-widening area of social relations, from the production of television fictions to the presentation of state agencies and political organisations or the more recent marketing of sympathy by charities and voluntary organisations.

He tells this story with considerable panache (well served by the translation), backed by a wealth of quotations and evidence – though the absence of any summary tables or charts makes for heavy going on occasions. Much of this is familiar, but the range of Mattelart's illustrations is a useful antidote to the parochialism of the recent discussion in Britain. Anyone concerned about the rise of sponsorship and product placement will find food for thought in his description of the pervasiveness of 'merchandising' on the Globo network in Brazil.

As a description of what has happened in the 80s the book is useful, but as an analysis of deeper processes it is more limited. Mattelart never gets to grips with the full ramifications of his subtitle. The privatisation of public space is as much to do with the corporate enclosure of imagination and identity as with the onward march of the market and marketing in economic and political relations. Mattelart acknowledges this, arguing that "the commoditisation of culture is, above all, the production of new kinds of subjectivity", but fails to follow it up.

In the book's last paragraph he contrasts the advertisers' vision of the democratic consumer marketplace with a conception of democracy grounded in the rights of citizenship. This relationship between the identities of citizen and consumer, and the ways they are expressed and managed, is at the centre of current political debate. Mattelart would have made a more provocative intervention if he had started with this question. As it is, he concentrates on tracing the way that the "advertising paradigm" has tried to impose itself as the dominant mode of communication. The result is a handy overview of basic trends that is strong on illustration but disappointingly thin on their underlying implications.



The sounds of women

Caryl Flinn

Echo and Narcissus: Women's Voices in Classical Hollywood Cinema

Amy Lawrence, University of California Press, \$37.50, 212pp

Feminist scholars have led the way in the recent burgeoning of work on film sound. Amy Lawrence's book will inevitably be compared to Kaja Silverman's influential *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema*; but *Echo and Narcissus* offers its own fine contribution.

For Lawrence, sound's relationship to image in Hollywood films parallels that between Echo and Narcissus in Greek mythology. Echo pined away until nothing was left of her but a voice (and one which mimicked the words of others at that); Narcissus, on the other hand, was defined visually and needed nothing but himself. As Lawrence argues in her introduction, cinema sound functions like this 'echo': as a devalued Other which reinforces allegedly more important narrative and visual information. According to Lawrence's thesis, "Both sound and woman... have been made Echo to a vain and self-absorbed Narcissus".

Lawrence's enquiry into the female voice in cinema looks first at the material aspects of sound recording. Next, she examines women's relationship to language generally. And last, she discusses the possibility of women producing 'authorial' voices. The first chapter is the strongest, demonstrating the ways in which sound recording and transmission technology have weakened and marginalised the female voice.

Lawrence begins with the way nineteenth-century sound technology (literally) en-gendered the human voice. Female voices were used to soothe or serve (telephone operators were almost always young women), while male voices were documented and preserved by phonographs (the famous 'His Master's Voice' publicity initially depicted the dog perched on a coffin, listening to its master's potent voice speaking from beyond the grave). The female voice knew no such authority, and 'talking records' made by women simply did not sell. One commentator claimed in 1928 that "The speech characteristics of women, when changed to electric impulses, do not blend with the electrical characteristics of our present day radio equipment". Another described the baritone as "the ideal radio voice". When recordings became available for domestic entertainment, publicity showing the ease with which the new technology might enter the home featured women using it. Such conventions, Lawrence argues, set the stage for the later treatment of women's voices in the Hollywood movie.

Ultimately, like Silverman before her, Lawrence insists on Hollywood's almost monolithic silencing of female voices. This

position tends to foreclose discussion: is all of Hollywood's output to be read this way? What of the female voice in 'women's genres' like the musical or melodrama?

Such avenues are largely unexplored, although Lawrence does consider some musical aspects of *Miss Sadie Thompson*. Nevertheless, her analyses convincingly demonstrate how problematic women's relationship to spoken authority was in Hollywood films from the silent era to the early 60s. Three adaptations of Somerset Maugham's *Rain* provide the centerpiece of her discussion, and Lawrence's attentiveness to the interaction of these texts is impressive. The analyses are careful and detailed, and enable her to develop some of the ideas and theses laid out in her opening chapter.

The book is well illustrated, and one couldn't ask for more lucid, graceful writing. However, some of Lawrence's postulations are more persuasive than others. Her reading of *Sorry, Wrong Number*, for instance, is first rate (Barbara Stanwyck's 'overhearing' of a wife murder leads to her own death, while when *Rear Window's* Jimmy Stewart witnesses a similar murder he successfully solves it). But her argument that a "female authorial voice" exists in Robert Mulligan's *To Kill a Mockingbird* is less convincing in the light of that film's relentless support of the paternal authority embodied by Gregory Peck.

The only other problem marring this excellent study is a tendency to rely on other scholars (for example, sound theorists Michel Chion and Guy Rosolato or psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan) to summarise important primary sources. That said, *Echo and Narcissus* gives eloquent voice to crucial issues surrounding the study of cinema sound.

Silenced by sound technology: Barbara Stanwyck's voice goes unheard in 'Sorry, Wrong Number'



Shorts

Potboilers: Methods, Concepts and Case Studies in Popular Fiction

Jerry Palmer, Routledge, £10.99, 219pp

● A whistle-stop survey of popular narrative forms in print, film and TV which looks at the way mass-produced fictions have been approached by critics and theorists over the last twenty years. Palmer investigates crime novels and films, soap opera, romance and TV sitcoms, arguing against elitist distinctions between 'high' and 'low' culture.

Cinema

Nigel Hunter, Wayland, £7.95, 48pp

● Lavishly illustrated introduction to the history of world cinema, from 'Pioneers' (Lumière Brothers, Georges Méliès *et al*) to 'Contemporaries' (post-60s film-makers). Aimed at young people, the book suffers from its broad survey approach, but nevertheless contains informed and intelligent discussion of critical debates and historical developments.

Framing the Falklands War:

Nationhood, Culture and Identity

James Aulich (ed), Open University Press, £12.99, 150pp

● A collection of essays examining the myths surrounding the Falklands conflict – the war that Thatcher claimed "put the 'Great' back into Great Britain". Contributors examine news output, films such as *Tumbledown* and *Veronico Cruz*, press coverage and the work of artists.

Images of Disability on Television

Guy Cumberbatch and Ralph Negrine, Routledge, £35, 180pp

● Based on a detailed analysis of programme content commissioned by the Broadcasting Research Unit, the book looks at the frequency of occurrence of disability and how it is perceived and presented by programme makers. Interviews with disabled people themselves and their carers are included to provide greater understanding of their experiences and to argue the need for a change in attitudes.

Film and Phenomenology:

Towards a Realist Theory of Cinematic Representation

Allan Casebier, Cambridge University Press, £30, 165pp

● Returning to the writings of the 'father of phenomenology', Edmund Husserl, Casebier mounts an attack on all existing theories of cinematic representation – from Bazin to Barthes. For example he denounces recent feminist film theory for its idealism, arguing that it would benefit from a better understanding of Husserlian phenomenological feminism, which, by positing the independent existence of objects or persons, allows a return to "woman as woman".

Cinema Arthuriana:

Essays on Arthurian Film

Kevin J. Harty (ed), Garland Publishing, \$37, 255pp

● Riding the wave of 80s interest in the legend of the Once and Future king, this book looks at film versions of the myth from Edwin J. Porter's 1904 *Parsifal* to George Romero's *Knight Riders* and Spielberg's *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. Particularly relevant in the light of the recent release of Terry Gilliam's *The Fisher King*.

Obituaries

Compiled by Bob Baker

● **November 1990** Don Chaffey, competent all-rounder, most successful with fantasy (*Jason and the Argonauts*, *One Million Years B.C.*); Mikko Niskanen, leading Finnish film-maker.

● **December 1990** Sergio Corbucci, prolific director, notably of Spaghetti Westerns (*Il grande silenzio*, *Il mercenario*); Richard Benner, film-maker, primarily on gay themes (*Outrageous*, *Gemini*); Aaron Copland, whose scores included *Of Mice and Men*, *The Red Pony*; Robert Cummings, lightweight lead for Hitchcock, Sirk, Anthony Mann; Joan Bennett; Martin Ritt; Mike Mazurki, gargoyle-like heavy, Moose Malloy in *Farewell My Lovely*; Anne Revere, whose persona encompassed the saintly (*National Velvet*) and the repressed (*Fallen Angel*) before fading away in the McCarthy era; Pierre Chenal, noir specialist, though his biggest hit was the comedy *Clochemerle*; Gene Callahan, production designer (*The Arrangement*, *Places in the Heart*); Umberto Tirelli, costume designer (*Amadeus*, *The Name of the Rose*); Richard Irving, TV producer/director of *Columbo* and co.

Joan Bennett's enduring success can be measured by the curious range of characters she played over forty odd years. If the early part of her career seems to fade from memory, it may be because she was one of the few actresses to snub Hollywood's golden glamour rule by dyeing her naturally blonde hair black and taking her place on the darker side of the mirror. Few might remember that she played such characters as the sunny and wistful Amy in George Cukor's *Little Women* (1934). Instead it is such searing images as the raven-haired Bennett in cheap mules and peignoir, tramping it up in Fritz Lang's *Scarlet Street* (1945), which more evocatively characterise her career.

As the contemptible but fascinating "Lazy Legs", she was one of the ultimate *femmes fatales*, seducing Edward G. Robinson from dour respectability into a perfumed world of tawdry excess – as she had done the year before in Lang's *The Woman in the Window* (1944). Bennett's collaboration with Lang started with *Man Hunt* (1941), when she donned mac and beret to play a Cockney prostitute. But while she mined the seamy depths in such tough-talking roles, Lang was also ingenious enough to cast her as the newly-wed in the Gothic *The Secret Beyond the Door* (1948).

A year later, another European director, Max Ophüls, chose her for *The Reckless Moment* (1949) as the bourgeois matriarch Lucia, who like Mildred Pierce before her colludes in a crime in order to protect her daughter and family. It was one of the last of the era's more arresting female roles. In the same year, she played the heartily domestic mother in Minnelli's *Father of the Bride*. And like other versatile actresses of her generation who had cooked up a fire



Joan Bennett



Muriel Box

on screen, she was put back in the kitchen. *Lizzie Francke*

● **January** Richard Maibaum, who scripted numerous James Bonds; Renato Rascel, comedian specialising in optimistic underdogs; Keye Luke, Charlie Chan's Number One son and all-purpose Oriental; Vasco Pratolini, novelist (*Cronaca familiare*) and scriptwriter (*Paisà*); Leo Hurwitz, documentarist, co-director of *Native Land*; John Russell, the cause of the trouble in *Rio Bravo*; Jack Schaefer, Western novelist (*Shane*, *Monte Walsh*); John McIntire, avuncular character actor, the sheriff in *Psycho*.

● **February** Carol Dempster, a favourite lead of D.W. Griffith's; Dean Jagger, portrayer of weak vessels; Danny Thomas, radio star who tried unsuccessfully to transfer to the screen; Edward A. Blatt, stage director signed by Warners (*Between Two Worlds*, *Escape in the Desert*); Birger Malmsten, intense lead of half a dozen early Bergmans; Jean Rogers, heroine of *Flash Gordon* and other 30s cliff-hangers.

● **March** Serge Gainsbourg; Ian McLellan Hunter, writer of *Roman Holiday*, black-listed over to the UK and *Robin Hood*; Salvo Randone, the fiery judge in *Salvatore Giuliano*; Klaus Hellwig, whose Action Films produced e.g. *La Dentellière*, *Providence*; Maurice Zolotow, show-biz columnist; G. Aravindan, Indian director (*The Circus Tent*, *Masquerade*); George Sherman, director of Westerns, from low-budget Republics to big-budget Waynes; Ralph Bates, star of Hammer horrors and much TV; Jean Prat, prestigious TV director; Aldo Ray, beefy, leather-larynxed tough guy (*Men in War*, *The Naked and the Dead*).

● **April** Ken Curtis, Vera Miles' unsuccessful suitor in *The Searchers*; Graham Greene; Maurice Binder, designer of fancy credit titles; David Lean; Don Siegel; William Dozier, head of Rampart Films (*Letter from an Unknown Woman*), later production executive with RKO, Warners; A.B. Guthrie Jr, Western writer (*The Big Sky*, *The Kentuckian*); Carmine Coppola, composer father of Francis; Steve Broidy, in charge of Monogram Pictures.

● **May** Richard Thorpe, MGM workhorse director; Charles A. Kaufman, writer, specialist on psychological matters, notably for Huston (*Let There Be Light*, *Freud*); Wilfrid Hyde-White, comedian, dapper and desiccated; Joy Batchelor, leading British animator, with husband John Halas; Ronald Lacey, purveyor of baby-faced villainy (*The Boys*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*); Edwina Booth, the jungle queen in Van Dyke's *Trader Horn*, believed by many to be already dead; Muriel Box; Lino Brocka; Fletcher Markle, prolific 50s TV director, occasional cinema (*Man with a Cloak*); Eugene Lourie, designer in Europe (*La Grande illusion*) and Hollywood (*Shock Corridor*); Coral Browne, who fused private and professional personas in *An Englishman Abroad*.

Muriel Box (born Muriel Baker, 1905), like many women before and since, began in

the British film industry seated before a typewriter, tapping out scripts. Unlike many others, she refused to stay put. By the 40s, others were typing scripts she herself had written. *The Seventh Veil* (1945), devised with her husband Sydney Box, won a large audience for its succulent story of a disturbed concert pianist trying to escape the influence of her neurotic guardian. *Holiday Camp* (1947) – another big hit – conjured up a fascinating kaleidoscope of the post-war British at play. (Do not blame Muriel for the Huggett family spin-offs that followed.)

By 1952, she was directing. *The Happy Family* (1952), a quaint story of a grocery shop under threat, offered no more than pleasant comedy. But *Street Corner* (1953) dug deeper into British life, surveying the lives of policewomen on the Chelsea beat with a tender, feminist heart; for all the constraints of the portmanteau format, it remains her most interesting film. Thereafter, Muriel Box turned a deft hand to thrillers, comedies, stage adaptations (*Simon and Laura*, from 1954, sparkles still with its stylish playing and amusing jokes at television's expense). *Rattle of a Simple Man* (1964), from Charles Dyer's comedy, concluded a useful, decent directing career that should have continued longer. *Geoff Brown*

Lino Brocka could never have been just a film-maker. By the time he committed himself to a career in the Philippine film industry (in 1970, at the age of thirty), he had been through two crucial, formative experiences: eighteen months working in a Hawaiian leper colony, and several years helping to organise and run PETA, a theatre school and performance group for underprivileged children in Manila and the provinces. He had also come through an intense affair with a young American actor (now a star) which helped him to sort out his own sexual orientation.

More articulate and engaged than his distinguished contemporaries Ishmael Bernal and Mike De Leon, Brocka was constantly involved in struggles: against government corruption, against censorship, against cronyism, for freedom of speech, for the right to strike and for the rule of law. The great majority of Brocka's films were popular melodramas, most based on comic strips. The more ambitious films that won him his international reputation – *Manila, In the Claws of Darkness* (1975), *Jaguar* (1979), *Bayan Ko: My Own Country* (1984), *Fight for Us* (1989), and a few others – were equally rooted in melodrama but with an angrier, social-realist edge.

His shooting schedules had to leave time for his endless meetings, demonstrations and acts of mercy (like providing transport for refugees). Towards the end of his life, he tired of the incessant calls on his time and commitment and consciously sought a lower profile. But controversy dogged him to the last: President

Aquino's chief censor was as much his foe as Imelda Marcos and her stooges had been. *Tony Rayns*

● **June** René Lefèvre, pre-war star (*Le Crime de M. Lange*), also writer and one-off director (*Opéra Muet*); Peggy Ashcroft; Bernard Miles; Luis de Pina, head of Portuguese Film Archives; Joan Caulfield, 40s Paramount starlet (*Blue Skies*, *The Unsuspected*); Jean Arthur; Bill Douglas; Lea Padovani, Euro player (*Give Us This Day*, *Montparnasse 19*); Milton Subotsky, showman/producer (*It's Trad, Dad!*, *Torture Garden*).

● **July** Michael Landon, *Teenage Werewolf* who moved to *Bonanza* and *Little House on the Prairie*; Lee Remick, actress, whose roles ranged from the desperate alcoholic of *Days of Wine and Roses* (1962) to the sophisticated baroness in Merchant-Ivory's *The Europeans* (1979); Jack Goodrich, veteran sound man; Mildred Dunnock, portrayer of spinsters, unloved wives and sundry eccentrics; Suzy Prim, versatile pre-war star; James Franciscus, incarnation of *Youngblood Hawke*, the voice of *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*; Brendan J. Stafford, who shot many a modest 'B'; Earl Robinson, balladeer (*A Walk in the Sun*, *Muscle Beach*; Rellys, member of the Pagnol troupe; Arthur Knight, critic, author of *The Liveliest Art* (1957).

● **August** Luigi Zampa, director formed in the neo-realist era; Richard Wilson, associate of Welles, oddball director (*Invitation to a Gunfight*) in his own right; Innes Lloyd, illustrious British TV producer; Niven Busch, writer specialising in tortured psyches (*Duel in the Sun*, *Pursued*); Emiliano Piedra, producer of *Chimes at Midnight*, several Carlos Saura pictures.

● **September** Frank Capra; Thomas Tryon, Preminger's *Cardinal*, then bestselling author; Alex North; Brad Davis, Fassbinder's *Querelle*; Michel Soutter, Swiss director (*L'Escapade*, *Repérages*); Theo Cowan, veteran press agent; Joe Pasternak, producer of musicals at Universal and MGM; Carol White, to whose characters good things seldom happened; Durga Khote, Bombay star since the 30s; Viviane Romance, usually found slinking through the boudoirs and night-clubs of pre-war French cinema; Miles Davis, who occasionally worked in movies, as composer (*Ascenseur pour l'échafaud*) and performer (*The Hot Spot*).

Alex North was in the forefront of that generation of post-war Hollywood composers who guided American film music out of nineteenth-century Europe. Until the early 50s, Hollywood's musical norm had been German romanticism; North's arrival in Hollywood in 1951 – to score Elia Kazan's film version of *A Streetcar Named Desire* – was a major breakthrough. Previously jazz had been used in films merely as musical scenery or background. North demonstrated how it could work as an integral part of the dramatic score.



Lino Brocka



Klaus Kinski

North learned much from composers like Prokofiev, Bartok, Copland and Ellington; he spent two years studying and working in Russia in the 30s, a fact which was to cause Senator McCarthy some concern in later years. He worked in ballet (Agnes de Mille, Martha Graham) for some years before enlisting in the US Army in 1942, and composed documentary scores for the Office of War Information, including *China Strikes Back* (1936) and *Heart of Spain* (1937). For Kazan, he also scored *Viva Zapata!* (1952), for John Huston *The Misfits* (1961), and later *Wise Blood* (1979), *Under the Volcano* (1984) and *Prizzi's Honor* (1985); on the epic scale, *Spartacus* (1960), *Cleopatra* (1963) and *Cheyenne Autumn* (1964).

Our view of North is still incomplete: we should know some of his earlier non-film music, particularly the "Revue for Clarinet and Orchestra" commissioned by Benny Goodman in 1946; the cantatas "Morning Star" (based on the Nuremberg trials) and "Negro Mother" to a text by Langston Hughes; and the First Symphony written on a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1947. And what about the mysterious score composed for Kubrick's *2001 – A Space Odyssey*, but rejected by the director in favour of Strauss and Ligeti? North composed his last major score, for John Huston's last film *The Dead* (1987), at the age of seventy-seven. *Christopher Palmer*

● **October** Phil Feldman, producer, notably for Peckinpah (*The Wild Bunch*, *The Ballad of Cable Hogue*); Harry M. Popkin, independent producer (*And Then There Were None*, *The Well*); Donald Houston, 'Bevin boy' discovery of *The Blue Lagoon*, later unrestrained character actor; Gene Roddenberry, begetter of *Star Trek*; Heck Allen, aka Clay Fisher, aka Will Henry, Tex Avery's story man in the first manifestation, Western writer (*McKenna's Gold*, *The Tall Men*) in the others; Sylvia Fine, wife of Danny Kaye, writer of his tongue-twisting songs; John Kobal, he of the famous Collection; Joseph Papp, Broadway heavyweight, manager of Hollywood Actors Lab.

● **November** Irwin Allen, producer, occasional director of special-effects movies (*The Lost World*, *The Poseidon Adventure*); Mort Shuman, composer of many pop standards, latterly based in Europe (*A Day at the Beach*, *Une femme fidèle*); Fred MacMurray; Gene Tierney; Yves Montand; Tony Richardson; Jerry Epstein, assistant on Chaplin's *Limelight*, producer of his *Countess from Hong Kong*; Tutte Lemkow, Norwegian-born, British-based actor/dancer (*Moulin Rouge*, *Fiddler on the Roof*); Daniel Mann, who directed adaptations of Williams, Inge, Miller, as well as Willard's rats; Tadashi Imai, whose socialist convictions were reflected in his *Still We Live*, *Rice*; Anton Furst, production designer (*Full Metal Jacket*, *Batman*); Klaus Kinski; Mel Dinelli, top radio writer, specialist in suspense (*The Window*, *The Reckless Moment*); Ralph Belamy, who played being unlucky in love.

Klaus Kinski "Well", says the hunch-backed baddie with a nervous twitch and pop eyes who bears a striking resemblance to a gargoyle on the parapet of Bamberg Cathedral. "Well, if it isn't the smoker..." "It's a small world", grunts Lee Van Cleef in reply. "Yes", says the hunch-back, "And very, very...bad". It was at this moment during the screening of the rough-cut of Sergio Leone's *For a Few Dollars More* (1965) that composer Ennio Morricone – normally a restrained sort of person – surprised everyone by exploding with laughter at Klaus Kinski's performance: over the top, mannered, bizarre, and yet one of the most memorable things about the film.

Before his all-too-brief role in the Dollars film, Kinski had appeared in assorted multi-national spy films (*That Man in Istanbul*, 1964), thrillers (*Scotland Yard versus Dr Mabuse*, 1963) and sauerkraut Westerns (*Winnetou II*, 1964). And he was to spend the next ten years or more in and around the assembly lines of Cinecittà and Almeria: most notably as a bandit priest who lobs grenades at the federales in Damiano Damiani's politically correct *A Bullet for the General* (1966); and as a vicious bounty killer with a scarf wrapped around his face in Sergio Corbucci's *The Big Silence* (1968).

And yet, in his autobiography *Dying to Live* (published in Germany and France in 1976), Kinski bemoaned the fact that he was forced to appear in European popcorn movies (he called this 'dying') when he should have been getting critical attention at the better class of film festival (he called this 'living'). All this was to change when Werner Herzog cast Kinski as an assortment of larger-than-life obsessives, from the mid-70s onwards: a Spanish conquistador who ends up lording it over the monkeys in *Aguirre, Wrath of God* (1972); old red eyes in the remake of *Nosferatu* (1979); and an Irishman(!) who takes the glories of Caruso into the heart of the Amazonian rain forests in *Fitzcarraldo* (1982). And yet, for some, his Spaghetthis, with helpings of giallo and orrore, remained the gourmet performances. Klaus Kinski, born Claus Günther Nakszynski in Danzig (now Poland) in 1926, really is irreplaceable – as is the kind of film in which he made his assumed name. *Christopher Frayling*

● **December** Rodney Ackland, scriptwriter (49th Parallel, *Queen of Spades*), occasional director; Herb Jaffe, producer (*The Wind and the Lion*, *Jinxed!*); Jack Trevor Story, novelist (*The Trouble with Harry*) and scriptwriter (*Live Now – Pay Later*); Stuart Byron, critic for *Film Comment*, among others; Eleanor Boardman, wife of King Vidor, his lead in *The Crowd*; Walter Chiari, handsome comic; Orane Demazis, centrepiece of the Pagnol trilogy.

The above list is a continuation for 1990 of the obituaries published in the old-style *Sight and Sound*, Winter 1990/91, and a complete record for 1991.

Reviews

Reviews, synopses
and full credits
for all the month's
new films

All I Want for Christmas

Certificate
U
Distributor
UIP
Production Company
Paramount
Executive Producer
Stan Rogow
Producer
Mary Kay Powell
Co-producer
Vicky Herman
Associate Producer
Robert P. Cohen
Production Office
Co-ordinator
Myrna Huffman
Unit Production Manager
Robert P. Cohen
Location Manager
Joanna Guzzetta
Post-production Supervisor
Steve Oster
Casting
Judith Holstra
Associate:
Nikky Valko
Extras:
Central Casting
Assistant Directors
J. Michael Haynie
Douglas Glen Sanford
Martin Jedlicka
David E. Larson
Screenplay
Thom Eberhardt
Richard Kramer
Director of Photography
Robbie Greenberg
Colour
Technicolor
Matte Photography
Wade Childress
Supervisor:
Craig Barron
Reference:
Michael Jarocki
Camera Operators
Dennis Smith
Chris Hayes
24 Frame
Video Displays
Intervideo
Matte Paintings
Matte World
Supervisor:
Michael Pangrazio
Artists:
Bill Mather
Frank Ordaz
Editors
Peter E. Berger
Dean Goodhill
Production Designer
Herman Zimmerman
Art Director
Randall McIlvain
Set Designers
Masako Masuda
Ron Yates
Set Decorator
John M. Dwyer
Special Effects
Co-ordinator
Alan E. Lorimer
Music/Musical Director
Bruce Broughton
Orchestrations
Don Nemitz
Music Production Supervisors
John E. Oliver
Lou Forestieri
Music Supervisors
Becky Mancuso
Tim T. Sexton
Music Editor
Patricia Carlin
Music
Co-ordinators
Hillary Bratton
Eva Ein
Songs
"All I Want" by David Foster, Linda Thompson, performed by Stephen Bishop;
"Baby, It's Cold Outside" by Frank Loesser; "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" by Hugh Martin, Ralph Blane; "Heart and Soul"

by Frank Loesser, Hoagy Carmichael; "I Love You Truly" by Carrie Jacobs-Bond; "She's My Cutie" by T. Edmond, K. White, J. Clay, performed by K.M.C. Kru; "Silver Bells" by Jay Livingston, Ray Evans; "Sleepwalk" by Ann Farina, John Farina, Santo Farina, performed by Santo and Johnny; "Stagger Lee" by Harold Logan, Lloyd Price, performed by Lloyd Price; "Under the Christmas Tree" by Albert Hammond, John Bettis, performed by Bob Gullie; "Yakety Yak" by Jerry Leiber, Mike Stoller, performed by The Coasters
Choreographer
Marguerite Derricks
Costume Design
Nolan Miller
Costume Supervisors
Emma Trenchard
William D. McGough
Costumers
Radford J. Polinsky
Gail Viola
Make-up
Supervisor:
Frank Carrisosa
Artists:
Carrie Angland
Lauren Bacall;
Wayne Massarelli
Leslie Nielsen;
Jim Scribner
Titles/Opticals
Cinema Research Corporation
Supervising Sound Editors
Tom C. McCarthy
Gary Krivacek
Sound Editors
Jeremy Gordon
Sanford Ponder
Bill Voightlander
Mark Mangino
Harry Cheney
Mark Larry
Mark LaPointe
Nick Kypros
John Sisti
Victor Lackey
Catherine LeBaigue
John Reynolds
Gregory Jacobs
Dave Williams
Sound Recordists
Henry W. Garfield
Music:
Armin Steiner
ADR Recordist
Bob Baron
Dolby stereo
Consultant:
Douglas Greenfield
Sound Re-recordists
B. Tennyson
Sebastian II
John J. Stephens
Joel Fein
Foley Artists
Robert Freedman
Jim Mariano
New York Research
Norman Mintz
Production Assistants
Linda Fox
Colleen Rooney
Nick Goodwin Self
Stephen Welke
Thomas M. Henner
Tamar Yehezkeili
Lorne Matthew Lieberman
Stunt Co-ordinator
Charles Croughwell

Cast
Leslie Nielsen
Santa
Lauren Bacall
Lillian Brooks
Harley Jane Kozak
Catherine O'Fallon
Jamey Sheridan
Michael O'Fallon
Ethan Randall
Ethan O'Fallon
Kevin Nealon
Tony Boer
Thora Birch
Hallie O'Fallon
Amy Oberger
Stephanie
Andrea Martin
Olivia
Patrick Labrecque
Marshall
Michael Alaimo
Frankie
Joanne Baron
Darrell Kunitomi
Salesdervishes
Alan Brooks
Mr Chase
Elizabeth Cherney
Paige
Otto Coelho
Bruiser
Joe Costanza
Frank Girardeau
Burlies
J. Teddy Davis
Santa's Helper
Tracy Diane
Girl in Line
Joey Gaynor
Shep
Felicity La Fortune
Susan
Phil Leeds
Mr Feld
Neal Lerner
Caterer
Harriet Medin
Mrs Graff
Devin Oatway
Kevin Mars
Kavi Raz
Cabbie
Bernardo Rosa Jr
Paramedic
Camille Saviola
Sonya
J. D. Stone
Lollipop Kid
Renee Taylor
Sylvia
Edith Varon
Stella
Joshua Wiener
Brad
Josiah Berryhill
George Both Jr
Erik Von Detten
Chad Doreck
Ryan Hartman
Todd Hartman
Ryan Hill
Channing C. Holmes
Gabriel Jimenez
Aaron Kisner
Justin Klosky
Donny B. Lord
J. R. Nutt
Mitchell Roche
Ryan Sheridan
Richard Michael Stuart
Norman Tatlock Jr
Bobby Waddington
Michael Weiner
D. Scott Wolf
Derek J. Young
Choir

8,307 feet
92 minutes

USA 1991

Director: Robert Lieberman

New York. Thirteen-year-old Ethan O'Fallon and his seven-year-old sister Hallie are dismayed at the thought of the first Christmas since their parents' divorce. They live with their mother Catherine, who has a high-flying publishing job and is anxious to keep up the family's affluent life style. Their father Michael has opted out of yuppie social circles to open a diner.

The kids approve of their father's new life and resent Catherine's boyfriend Tony Boer, a Wall Street businessman. Desperate for the family to be together, Hallie visits Santa Claus at Macy's to ask for her parents' remarriage. Since the divorce, the children's grandmother Lillian, an ex-Broadway actress, has been living with them. Catherine throws a party at which Lillian and Hallie do a star turn, and Ethan meets Stephanie, whose parents are also divorced. Ethan runs into her next day at the Museum of Modern Art, and the two go out on a tentative date.

When the children find out that their mother plans to marry Tony, they and Stephanie hatch a complicated plan to reunite their parents. On Christmas Eve, the kids create havoc by letting loose white mice in the house, locking Tony in an ice-cream truck, and engineering events so that Catherine eventually spends the night with Michael. The planned reconciliation does not take place, however, until Tony, after a night spent in the freezing truck, rushes into the house exclaiming that he has always hated the kids. Catherine immediately calls off the wedding. She and Michael kiss and make up, to the delight of Ethan and Hallie.

Directed by Robert Lieberman, whose previous credits include 800 commercials and an episode of *thirtysomething*, *All I Want* is a Pepsi advert with angst. There are one or two laughs – *Saturday Night Live* comedian Kevin Nealon makes the most of his Manhattan shark role – while Lauren Bacall is magnificent as the children's worldly grandmother. But the combination of sugary Christmas fare with cynical New Yorkers and MTV soundtrack singularly fails to provide the necessary dramatic tension. The children's overacting is also a problem. As well as masterminding a dauntingly complicated plan, Ethan Randall manages to expose Tony as a fraud, get Mom and Dad to kiss and make up, fall in love himself, and give a hoarse little-man speech in front of the Christmas tree. How do kids get to be this old?

Lucy O'Brien

Certificate
15
Distributor
Rank
Production Company
Circle Films
Executive Producers
Ted Pedas
Jim Pedas
Ben Barenholtz
Bill Durkin
Producer
Ethan Coen
Co-producer
Graham Place
Production Co-ordinator
Judi Rosner
Production Manager
Alma Kutttruff
Unit Manager
Ron Neter
Location Manager
Amy Ness
Post-production Supervisor
James DeMeaux
Costing
Donna Isaacson
John Lyons
Associate:
Christine Sheaks
Extras:
LA Casting Express
Michael Heit
Assistant Directors
Joe Camp III
Randall Newsome
Tom Gamble
Screenplay
Ethan Coen
Joel Coen
Director of Photography
Roger Deakins
In colour
Steadicam Operator
Mark O'Kane
Editor
Roderick Jaynes
Associate Editor
Michael Berenbaum
Production Designer
Dennis Gassner
Art Directors
Leslie McDonald
Bob Goldstein
Set Design
Richard Fernandez
Set Decorator
Nancy Haigh
Set Dressers
Leslie "Tinker"
Linville
On-set:
Alice Baker
Scenic Artists
Michael Daigle
Stand-by:
Gilbert Johnquest
Storyboard Artist
J. Todd Anderson
Special Effects Supervisor
Robert Spurlock
Special Effects Co-ordinator
Laurel Schneider
Special Effects Foremen
Richard Stutsman
Joseph Viskocil
Special Effects
Stetson Visual Services
Robert L. Olmstead
Donn Markel
Roy Goode
Tom Griep
Don Krause

Music
Carter Burwell
Music Director
Sonny Kompanek
Source Arranger
Larry Wilcox
Music Editor
Todd Kasow
Choreography
Jacqui Landrum
Bill Landrum
Costume Design
Richard Hornung
Wardrobe Supervisor
Lahly Poore
Make-up
Jean Black
Special Make-up
Rick Lazzarini
Supervising Sound Editors
Skip Lievsay
Dialogue:
Philip Stockton
Marissa Littlefield
Frank Kern
Steven Visscher
Blake Leyh
ADR Editor
Gail Showalter
Supervising Foley Editor
Bruce Pross
Sound Recordists
Allan Byer
Jean Marie Carroll
Music:
Michael Farrow
Dolby stereo
Consultant:
Bradford L. Hohle
Foley Recordist
Dominick Tavella
Sound Re-recordists
Lee Dichter
Kerry Kelley
Harry Higgins
Foley Artist
Marko A. Costanzo
Production Assistants
Joan Schneider
John Cummings
Brian Jochum
Alex Albanese
Carl Beyer
Catherine Anderson
Stephanie Zessos
Set:
Tom Hoeck
Stunt Co-ordinator
Gary Jensen
Stunts
Dave Efron
John Gillespie
Ben Jensen
Ethan Jensen
Bill Oliver
George Colucci
Christine Baur
Hugh McAfee
Lance Gilbert
Keith Tellez
David Powledge
A. Michael Lerner
Kim Koscki
Dennis Motes
Billy Bates
Fernando Celis
Michael Carr
Mickey Gilbert

Cast
John Turturro
Barton Fink
John Goodman
Charlie Meadows
Judy Davis
Audrey Taylor
Michael Lerner
Jack Lipnick
John Mahoney
W.P. Mayhew
Tony Shalhoub
Ben Geisler
Jon Polito
Lou Breeze
Steve Buscemi
Chet
David Warriow
Garland Stanford
Richard Portnow
Detective Mastrionotti
Christopher Murney
Detective Deusch
I.M. Hobson
Derek
Megan Faye
Poppy Carnahan
Lance Davis
Richard St. Claire
Harry Bugin
Pete
Anthony Gordon
Maitre d'
Jack Denbo
Stagehand
Max Grodenchik
Clapper Boy
Robert Beecher
Referee
Darwyn Swale
Wrestler
Gayle Vance
Geisler's Secretary
Johnny Judkins
Sailor
Jana Marie Hupp
USO Girl
Isabelle Townsend
Beauty
The voice of William
Preston Robertson

10,483 feet
116 minutes

USA 1991

Director: Joel Coen

1941. Following the successful Broadway opening of *Bare Ruined Choirs*, his play about fishmongers, young writer Barton Fink moves to Hollywood to work for Capitol Pictures. After checking into the rundown and rather eerie Hotel Earle, Barton meets studio boss Jack Lipnick and is told to script a wrestling B-picture to star Wallace Beery. Attempting to work in his hotel room, Barton is disturbed by strange noises, but is then befriended by the culprit, his neighbour Charlie Meadows, an insurance salesman. To help him over his writer's block, Barton is advised by his producer, Ben Geisler, to talk to Bill Mayhew, a famous novelist who is also under contract to the studio but who has a bad drinking problem.

Barton is attracted to Audrey, Mayhew's secretary, but she tells him that she and Mayhew are in love. Complaining of an ear infection, Charlie again visits Barton and demonstrates his prowess at wrestling. He later tells Barton that he has argued with a doctor about his ear and is going to New York for a few days. Barton argues with Mayhew when the latter drunkenly hits Audrey, and subsequently appeals to her for help with his script. She visits him at the hotel and reveals that she writes Mayhew's work.

They make love, but Barton then wakes to find Audrey's murdered corpse beside him. Charlie offers to help the hysterical Barton and removes Audrey's body. He later tells Barton that he is going away again and leaves a box with Barton which he says contains everything from his life. Barton is then visited by two detectives and learns that Charlie

is actually a psychopathic murderer, Karl "Madman" Mundt, whose victims include the ear doctor.

Barton finally manages to complete his script and goes dancing to celebrate. Returning to his room, he is questioned by the two detectives about Charlie, but the latter returns, sets fire to the hotel and kills the detectives. Charlie is furious at Barton for never listening to him, but spares his life. Barton leaves the hotel and goes to see Lipnick, who tells him that he didn't like the script but will keep him on contract. Still carrying Charlie's box, Barton goes to the beach and watches a girl looking out to sea...

The fact that *Barton Fink* proved such a resounding success at last year's Cannes Film Festival but a failure at the US box office ought, one feels, somehow to connect with the situation of its protagonist: a writer whose triumph on the 'respectable' New York stage is matched by a nightmarish failure to connect with the formulaic demands of a Hollywood studio. But as a neat way into the film's concerns and methods, the link is actually as unhelpful as it is obvious. Despite its setting, *Barton Fink* actually shows little concern with notions of classic Hollywood or what kind of culture it represents.

Characters like Lipnick, the studio chief, and Mayhew, the Faulkneresque drunken writer, are simple (and in the case of Lipnick, very funny) stereotypes, who serve as obvious distorted projections of Barton's prejudices about art and its social function ("I try to make a difference", as he pompously puts it). Barton's problem could be reduced to the fact that he doesn't listen: a final accusation made by the psychopathic Charlie, whose ▶



Things that go bump in hotel rooms: John Turturro, John Goodman

◀ attempts to tell Barton the truth about the 'common man' have been drowned out by the writer's ravings about the importance of theatre. But the film itself works out from rather than towards this conclusion. And its key location, and focal point, is not Hollywood but the Hotel Earle.

Thus Barton's inability to write his wrestling script is displaced and abstracted on the film's soundtrack, where every noise is amplified, echoed and distorted, becoming an ironic expression of writer's block, the point at which language fails and words are replaced by sounds. The link between the hotel setting and a writer's problems recalls *The Shining*, an impression heightened by repeated tracks down corridors. But the general atmosphere is more akin to the enclosed world of *Eraserhead*, particularly in images like that of wallpaper peeling as the paste melts. And the Coens share with Lynch an ability to find brilliant aural and tactile devices to suggest a world gone awry. But while *Wild at Heart* showed the dangers of simply allowing this facility free rein (a sense of excess for its own, wearying sake), *Barton Fink* gains a tragic edge by forcing its protagonist to embrace murder and madness with a real sense of desperation.

Blood Simple and *Miller's Crossing* were essentially adaptations, although based on no named work, of the writings of, respectively, James M. Cain and Dashiell Hammett. And in this sense, *Barton Fink* completes a kind of trilogy. For with its alienated hero trapped in a shabby hotel room and ensnared in an inexplicable murder, it captures the essence of that other great 30s crime writer, Cornell Woolrich. But while Woolrich was obliged to 'justify' his nightmarish scenarios with improbable explanations, the Coens choose instead to take their central character through apocalypse (the astonishing image of Charlie in the burning hotel corridor) to a kind of double limbo.

Barton Fink finally resolves itself, if not the details of its plot, with the scene of Barton sitting on the beach with Charlie's mysterious box, gazing at a girl gazing out to sea, an image previously seen hanging on his hotel wall. Prior to this, he has been told by Lipnick that he will be kept under contract, but that nothing he writes will be produced until he grows up. Barton thus remains caught in a space where word and image will never quite come together. By invoking Woolrich, however, and recalling that the film is set in 1941, one might predict that Barton's experiences will eventually resurface via the shadows of film noir.

Steve Jenkins

Curly Sue

Certificate
PG
Distributor
Warner Bros
Production Company
Warner Bros
Executive Producer
Tarquin Gotch
Producer
John Hughes
Associate Producer/Production Manager
Lynn M. Morgan
Location Manager
Tom Busch
2nd Unit Director
Freddie Hice
Casting
Janet Hirshenson
Jane Jenkins
Extras:
Holzer Roche Ridge
Casting
Assistant Directors
James Giovannetti Jnr
Jeanne Caliendo
Geoffrey Hansen
Aimee Kohn
2nd Unit:
Jeanne Caliendo
Screenplay
John Hughes
Director of Photography
Jeffrey L. Kimball
Colour
Technicolor
2nd Unit Photography
Flemming Olsen
Aerial Photography
David B. Nowell
Camera Operator
Douglas Ryan
Steadicam Operator
Bob Ulland
Video Playback
Frank Yario Jnr
Opticals
Kevin Nordine
Editors
Peck Prior
Harvey Rosenstock
Additional:
David B. Stiven
Production Designer
Doug Kraner
Art Director
Steven Schwartz
Art Department Co-ordinator
Kim S. Hobbs
Set Design
Gary Baugh
William Fosse
Masako Masuda
Set Decorators
Sam Schaffer
Marjorie Fritz-Birch
Special Effects Co-ordinator
John E. Gray
Special Effects
Rodman Kiser
Mike Hohe
Music
Georges Delerue
Supervising Music Editor
Dan Carlin
Music Editor
Eric Reasoner

Songs
"You Never Know"
by Steve Dorff, John Bettis, performed by Ringo Starr; "Innocent Believer" by John Hughes III, Matt Deakin, performed by 2YZ, Terry Wood; "Git Down" by John Hughes III, Matt Deakin, performed by 2YZ, Andrea Salazar, Kenyatta Vaughn; "Yacht Club Swing" by James C. Johnson, Thomas "Fats" Waller, Herman Autrey; "Thirty-Five-Thirty" by Paul Williams; "You're Nobody Till Somebody Loves You" by Russ Morgan, Larry Stock, James Cavanaugh; "Dudley Do-Right" by Fred Steiner; "Merrily We Roll Along" by Charlie Tobias, Murray Mencher, Eddie Cantor
Costume Design
Michael Kaplan
Costume Supervisor
Barbara Scott
Costumers
Men:
Luke Reichle
Women:
Kay Nottbusch
Cathy Newport-Logan
Make-up Artists
Ve Neill
Susan "Sam" Mayer
Title Design
R/Greenberg Associates
Supervising Sound Editors
Michael Wilhoit
Wylie Stateman
Sound Editors
Stuart Copely
Christopher Assells
Richard Dwan Jnr
Supervising ADR Editor
Gregg Baxter
Sound Recordists
Charles Wilborn
Music:
Bobby Fernandez
Dolby stereo
Foley Recordist
Gary "Wrecker" Hecker
Sound Re-recordists
John Reitz
Dave Campbell
Gregg Rudloff
Sound Effects Editors
Chris Hogan
Jay Richardson
Robert Batha
Foley Artists
Jeff Wilhoit
Christopher Moriana
Stunt Co-ordinator
Freddie Hice
Stunts
Troy Brown
Freddie Hice
Johnny Hock
Rick LeFevour
Stacy Logan
Daniel Maldonado
Cris Thomas-Palomino
Randy Popplewell
Chad Randall
Rich Wilkie

Cast
James Belushi
Bill Dancer
Kelly Lynch
Grey Ellison
Alisan Porter
Curly Sue
John Getz
Walker McCormick
Fred Dalton
Bernard Oxbar
Cameron Thor
Maitre d'
Branscombe Richmond
Albert
Steven Carell
Tesio
Gail Boggs
Anise Hall
Burke Byrnes
Dr Maxwell
Viveka Davis
Trina
Barbara Tarbuck
Mrs Arnold
Edie McClurg
Secretary
Charles Adams
Prison Guard
James W. Bolinski
Pawnbroker
Lyle Brown
Theatre Patron
Nadine Burke
Social Worker
Adele Robbins
DCGS Caseworker
Carol Chickering
Soprano
Grace Collette
Foster Mother
Ralph Foody
Drifter
Cedrick Pipes
Alonzo Hall
Cooks
Luke Reichle
Joel Levin
Tammy
Karabas-Brody
Patricia Hooker
Store Clerks
Joe Liss
Ticket Taker
Rocco Pecirno
Father of the Bride
Ely Pouget
Dinah Tompkins
Susan Mayer
Woman with Champagne Glass

9,164 feet
102 minutes

USA 1991

Director: John Hughes

● Bill Dancer, gentleman of the road and small-time grifter, arrives in Chicago with his young travelling companion, Curly Sue. In another part of the city, high-flying attorney Grey Ellison coldly advises her client Mrs Arnold to go for the most favourable divorce settlement with her husband by threatening to expose his misdemeanours. Grey later falls for an old con trick when Bill pretends that she has knocked him over with her car, and Grey takes the pair to a greasy-spoon café for dinner. Bill and Curly Sue find a hostel for the night where Curly Sue's ring is stolen by another vagabond. Unable to forget the incident, Grey is horrified when she knocks Bill down in a genuine accident the following day. She takes Bill and Curly Sue back to her apartment, where they are later found asleep by her boyfriend, the suave Walker McCormick. A row ensues but Grey refuses to turn the pair out. She later berates Bill for not putting Curly Sue in school, but he declares that he feels responsible for Curly Sue even though she is not his child.

Grey sets about washing and dressing Curly Sue, while Bill gets a labouring job. Having kitted out her guests in new outfits, Grey takes them for dinner to a classy restaurant from which Bill and Curly Sue were once ejected. Walker arrives and insults Bill, who leaves with Curly Sue, and they are then joined by Grey for a grifter's night on the town. The increasing attraction between Bill and Grey leads to Grey taking a new, kinder attitude at work, where she is now advising Mrs Arnold to try for a reconciliation with her husband.

She eventually quits her job to be with Curly Sue, but the vengeful Walker has called the authorities and the child is taken to a home for foundlings and Bill thrown in prison. Grey blackmails Mr Arnold into pulling strings to secure Curly Sue's



Two thirds: James Belushi, Alisan Porter

release into her care, and confronts Walker with his treachery. Grey returns home with Curly Sue where they discover a note from Bill, together with Curly Sue's ring which he has retrieved from the pawn shop. But the note is to say that Bill has not left, and all three are lovingly reunited in Grey's apartment.

● The outcome of John Hughes' *Curly Sue* is inevitable from its beginning. What is fragmented (Bill, Grey and Curly Sue) must become whole (the family), a resolution the film briskly arrives at with no real build-up of character or emotional involvement. The result, albeit entertaining, is unsatisfactory for adults and, one suspects, for children, being one of those peculiar Hollywood hybrids which, finally, addresses neither one audience nor the other.

Bill's transformation from street bum into blue-collar family man is awkwardly played by James Belushi, who looks more comfortable as a tramp than in his snazzy new suit. But it's Grey's transformation from cold yuppie bitch to caring mother and loving partner which is double-edged, invoking the supposed contradiction between professional female and real woman. The price Grey pays for a senior executive position in a law firm (although why is she dealing with dirty divorce cases?) is the abandonment of her feminine impulses and instincts. In the fleeting end scene, when the new 'family' pulls up outside the school gates to let Curly Sue off, observant viewers will notice first that Grey has traded her sporty little Mercedes for a more practical station wagon, and second, that Bill is driving it!

Hughes avoids the temptation to explain Bill's life on the road as some kind of existential choice (although he clearly didn't learn to play the piano in a flop house). He is the outsider, a familiar figure who brings warmth and humanity to the soulless, preoccupied world of hard-nosed business. Clearly, next to the detestable Walker, Bill is the 'new man' of the movie, putting commitments to people before convenience to himself and giving Grey the opportunity to get in touch with her real feelings.

Belushi's amiable good looks go well with Kelly Lynch's permanent air of vulnerability, and Alisan Porter's performance as Curly Sue is additional proof that all Americans can act from the cradle. But in the end it's a 'control' movie (mimicking Hughes' own legendary reputation as a 'control freak'), reinforcing decent values and standards against the perils of career on the one hand and the illusory attractions of a lumpy life on the other.

Jill McCreal

Dahong Denglong Gaogao Gua (Raise the Red Lantern)

Certificate
PG
Distributor
Palace Pictures
Production Company
Era International
In association with
China Film
Co-production
Corporation
Executive Producers
Hou Hsiao-Hsien
[Hou Xiaoxian]
Zhang Wenzhe
Producers
Chiu Fu-Sheng
[Qiu Fusheng]
Production Supervisor
Ma Dehe
Production Manager
Feng Yiting
Post-production Co-ordinator
Tokyo:
Shirley Kao
Assistant Directors
Zhang Hanjie
Gao Jingwen
Screenplay
Ni Zhen
Based on a short story by Su Tong
Director of Photography
Zhao Fei
Colour
Eastman Colour
Lighting
Johnny Tsang
[Zeng Junwei]
Editor
Du Yuan
Art Directors
Cao Jiuping
Dong Huamiao
Music
Zhao Jiping
Music Supervisor
Tachikawa Naoki
Costume Design
Huang Lihua
Make-up
Sun Wei
Sound Recordist
Li Lanhua

Cast
Gong Li
Songlian
Ma Jingwu
Chen Zuoqian
He Caifei
Meishan
Cao Cuifeng
Zhuoyun
Jin Shuyuan
Yuru
Kong Lin
Yan'er
Ding Weimin
Mother Song
Cui Zhigang
Doctor Gao
Chu Xiao
Feipu
Cao Zhengyin
Old Servant
Zhao Qi
Chen Baishun,
Housekeeper

11,208 feet
125 minutes

Subtitles

Hong Kong 1991

Director: Zhang Yimou

● Following her father's death and the family's consequent impoverishment, Songlian withdraws from university and through her stepmother contracts a marriage to the wealthy Chen Zuoqian. That summer she arrives at her husband's house and is quickly initiated into the traditions of this ancient family. The wife whom the master favours for the night has the red lanterns in her courtyard lit; she is awarded the privilege of a foot massage and may choose the menus for the day. Upon the regularity of the master's visits depends her position in the household.

Songlian's first night with her husband is interrupted by the singing of the third wife, Meishan, and her protestations of illness. Next day, Songlian meets the now elderly first wife, Yuru, the mother of an adult son, Feipu, known as the young master, and the second wife, Zhuoyun, who has a daughter. She discovers that her ill-tempered maid, Yan'er, herself harbours dreams of becoming a wife, and that Meishan, once a famous opera singer, is having an affair with doctor Gao. In a secret tower, she comes on the manacled remains of a body, evidence of what became in previous generations to wives who had illicit affairs.

Feipu pays a visit and with his flute-playing attracts Songlian, whose sole memento of her father is his flute. When the flute goes missing, suspicion falls on Yan'er (although in fact the master has destroyed it); searching Yan'er's room, Songlian discovers it illicitly hung with red lanterns, and also finds a doll, inscribed with her name by Zhuoyun, which Yan'er has been using to put a curse on her. She takes advantage of Zhuoyun's request for a haircut to wound her with the scissors. As winter sets in, Songlian feigns pregnancy as a way of furthering her status in the household. But the ruse is discovered by Yan'er, who informs Zhuoyun;

doctor Gao is called and Songlian is disgraced.

In revenge, she exposes Yan'er's secret cache of red lanterns, and the maid must kneel in the snow until she apologises. Collapsing, she is taken to hospital where she dies. While drinking alone to celebrate her birthday, Songlian is visited by Feipu, but rejects a gift he brings. In a drunken delirium, she inadvertently reveals Meishan's affair to Zhuoyun, who immediately sends men to surprise the couple. A horrified Songlian witnesses Meishan's incarceration and death in the tower. She then terrifies the servants by arranging a 'haunting' of Meishan's rooms. The following summer, a fifth wife arrives in the household, and in the courtyard notices the dishevelled figure of Songlian, now insane.

● In both *Red Sorghum* and *Ju Dou*, Zhang Yimou mobilised the traditional themes of melodrama – amorous passion, transgression, fear of disclosure and scandal – through a formal style which made the characters' domestic environment a key player in the unfolding drama. The winery in *Red Sorghum*, the dye works in *Ju Dou*, made concrete the conditions forming, indeed deforming, the lives of the films' protagonists. *Red Lantern* is likewise essentially confined to a single location: a fortress-like eighteenth-century mansion whose formal and arid spaces determine the temper of this tale of jealousy, plot and counter-plot.

A very Chinese fable about concubinage, desire and frustration is drained of its eroticism. Songlian's first night with her husband is depicted with extreme circumspection; Meishan's affair with Dr Gao is indicated by the most conventional of devices; her arrest in *flagrante delicto* and incarceration in the tower happen off-screen. Within the airless geometry of the mansion, any possibility of romance between the young master and Songlian cannot but remain unrealised, cancelled out by the physical space ▶



Gong Li – not a woman's story

◀ itself as by the logic of Zhang's cinematography. Zhang creates a world of extreme emotional coldness, an effect heightened by his static, tableaux-like sequences. There has scarcely been an icier setting for a supposed drama of desire since Pasolini's *Salò*.

Even the great play which Zhang's two previous films made with their settings as sites of productive labour has, as it were, been 'cancelled' here. Nothing at all is revealed of the economy that sustains the household, and indeed very little of the master as a 'character'. His functions are almost entirely superseded by that of the house itself and its traditions – the raising of the lanterns, the foot massage, the serving of meals. The principle of symmetry extends further, to the natural world, with the action taking place within a year's span, beginning and ending in summer.

But fine as this monumental approach is in many ways, it sits uncomfortably with the increasing flurries of narrative revelation. And it makes no headway at all with the 'woman's story' aspect of the subject, beyond implying criticism of its Confucian fatalism. Songlian is resigned to her fate in the introductory sequence; opera singer or student, the third wife remarks, woman's fate is the same. The extreme detachment of Zhang's approach works least well with the melodrama of the tower and Meishan's death. A director noted for his *mise en scène*, colour and form, he has here held back from the Hollywood brashness that marked his earlier films. But in doing so, he has left Gong Li with only one card to play, that of icon of frozen desire. It provides a poor context for her somewhat bizarre acts of retribution.

Raise the Red Lantern was shot in China's Shanxi province, as a co-production between Taiwan and the mainland, with a Hong Kong company acting as an intermediary. Still banned in China, it inevitably invites a reading as a comment on the state of affairs since Tiananmen Square. It shows characters whose individual pasts are subsumed within the greater traditions of the house itself, whose red lanterns symbolise not passion but only status. Denying Songlian's wedding-night request that he extinguish them, the master explains that he likes things "bright and formal", a phrase that recalls the "bright formality" of Chinese socialist-realist art. Zhang drains the warmth, passion and chaos that both desire (sexual) and change (political) bring, his characters becoming cyphers in the service of conventions that they transgress at their peril. It is a bleak metaphor.

Verina Glaessner

Death in Brunswick

Certificate

15

Distributor

Electric Pictures

Production Company

Meridian Films

With the

participation of

Australian Film

Finance/Film Victoria

Executive Producer

Bryce Menzies

Producer

Timothy White

Associate Producer

Lynda House

Production

Co-ordinator

Christine Hart

Unit Manager

Leigh Ammitzboll

Location Managers

Chris Odgers

Nikki Long

Casting

Greg Apps

Liz Mullinar Casting

Extras:

Christine Hart

Assistant Directors

John Wild

Andrew Merrifield

John Martin

Screenplay

John Ruane

Boyd Oxlade

Based on the novel by

Boyd Oxlade

Director of

Photography

Ellery Ryan

In colour

Camera Operators

2nd Unit:

David Parker

Clive Duncan

Steadicam Operator

Ian Jones

Graphics

Kent Inkster

Hugh Marchant

Editor

Neil Thumpston

Production Designer

Chris Kennedy

Art Department

Co-ordinator

Victoria Hobday

Set Dresser

Georgina Campbell

Scenic Artist

Deborah Goldsmith

Special Effects

Supervisor

Peter Stubbs

FX Technicians

Jeff Little

Kevin Turner

Music

Philip Judd

Music Extracts

"Symphony No. 5"

by Gustav Mahler,

performed

by Concertgebouw

Orchestra,

Amsterdam; "Victoria

Requiem", "Kyrie"

performed by The

Tallis Scholars

Music Performed by

Keyboards, Bouzouki,

Acoustic Guitars:

Philip Judd

Violin, Viola:

Jon Anderson

Clarinets, Flute:

John Barrett

Acoustic Guitar, Bass:

Euripides Euripidou

Accordion:

Joe Chindomo

Bouzouki:

George Spirou

Music Co-ordinator

Rebecca O'Brien

Songs

"Sophia", "Sinantisis",

"Leventikos Horos"

by Peter Volaris;

"Who's Gonna Love

You", "Never", "Heart

of Darkness" by

Archy Atron, Arthur

Christo, John Roptis,

performed by Knight;

"Living Fire", "Run

by Night", "Danger",

"Take Me" by Mark

Bremner, Tony Bucci,

Nick Cetrollo, Tony

Dilaveris, Colin

Roydez, performed

by Vortex; "I Got

You" by Neil Finn,

performed by

Sam Neill

Costume Design

Vicki Friedman

Wardrobe

Supervisor:

Cheyne Phillips

Make-up

Noriko Watanabe

Additional:

Amanda Rowbottom

Title Design

David Wong

Titles

Optical & Graphic

Supervising

Sound Editor

Dean Gawn

Sound Editor

Associate:

Paul Huntingford

Sound Recordist

Lloyd Carrick

Dolby stereo

Sound Re-recordist

Roger Savage

Sound Transfers

Eugene Wilson

Foley

Paul Pirola

Production

Assistant

Miriam Stein

Stunt Co-ordinator

Glenn Ruehlend

Stunts

Danny Baldwin

Russell Allan

Maureen Jones

Joe Pampanella

Stand-in

Sam Neill;

Iain Murton

Film Extracts

The Marsupials: Howling

III (1987)

Cast

Sam Neill

Carl Fitzgerald

Zoe Carides

Sophie Papafagos

John Clarke

Dave

Yvonne Lawley

Mrs Fitzgerald

Nico Lathouris

Mustafa

Nicholas

Papademetriou

Yanni Voulgaris

Boris Brkic

Laurie

Deborah Kennedy

June

Doris Younane

Carmel

Denis Moore

Catholic Priest

Kris Karahisar

Aris

Stephen Hutchinson

Tony

Huriye Balkaya

Mustafa's Wife

Orhan Akkus

Aslan

Daniel Kadamani

Cousin Con

Sakis Dragons

Mr Papafagos

Senol Mat

Haydar Akar

Ekmek Kulogu

Turks

Lachlan Jeffrey

Delinquent

Maria Beck

Maria

Marz Lupieri

Despina

David Hoffin

Glen Torrens

Dave's Boys

Anthony De Fazio

Daniel Pollock

Junkies

Bradley Pilato

Orion Erickson

Jordan Mills

Children in Cinema

Benjamin Menzies

Dave's Baby

Dino Nicolosi

Man in Church

Con Babanoitis

George Prataris

Taxi Drivers

Christos Linou

Man in Alley

Ali Ammouchi

Island Cooler Youth

Knight

Vortex

Bands in Club

9,841 feet

109 minutes

Australia 1990

Director: John Ruane

● Melbourne. Carl Fitzgerald, a downwardly mobile chef, lives in squalor, much to the displeasure of his snobbish mother. Carl takes a job at the Bombay Club, a dive run by the Greek Yanni, where he meets Sophie Papafagos, a young barmaid, Laurie, an unbalanced bouncer who immediately takes a dislike to him, and Mustafa, a Turkish kitchen aide. Carl and Sophie go out together and spend an afternoon having sex on a sofa-bed.

Later, Laurie and his friends beat up and rob Mustafa, who has been receiving stolen goods at the Bombay. They tell him that Carl informed on him, whereupon he attacks Carl, who accidentally kills him with a skewer. Carl and his grave-digging friend Dave dispose of Mustafa by putting him in a coffin with a woman whose husband is about to be buried in her grave. Sophie, whose father has arranged her marriage to Yanni, breaks up with Carl, and Mustafa's friends firebomb the Bombay, prompting Laurie to blame Carl.

Carl tries to talk to Sophie, but is kidnapped by Mustafa's friends. He tells them that Laurie was responsible for Mustafa's disappearance, and is then taken by the Turks to the club and instructed to have Laurie come out. Instead Carl persuades Sophie to run away with him, which prompts Yanni to break off the engagement. Laurie pursues the couple, running into the Turks, who decapitate him. Carl takes Sophie to Dave's house, where Dave's wife tells her that Carl is still married, and he explains that he is estranged from his wife.

Taking his mother to church, Carl has a vision in which Mustafa forgives him and he is convinced that no sin he commits is too heinous for redemption. He then



Sam Neill, after hours

learns that his mother has been withholding a \$100,000 trust fund that should be his, and he is sorely tempted to poison her. His anger, however, causes her to have a seizure. Later, with his divorce finalised and his mother in a wheelchair, Carl marries Sophie – while wearing a neckbrace after being punched by Mr Papafagos.

Despite its discouraging title – which vaguely refers to Mrs Fitzgerald's favourite record, the Mahler soundtrack of *Death in Venice* – *Death in Brunswick* is a sprightly black comedy, nicely adapting the nightmare tone of *After Hours* or *The Trouble with Harry* to a low-rent Australian setting. Sam Neill, stretching himself with a deliriously seedy loser performance, blends in perfectly with a nightmare world conjured by a succession of truly disgusting locations: Carl's ravaged tract house, with its piles of newspaper and unwashed crockery; the cockroach-infested Club Bombay kitchens; and even the more presentable but no less ghastly ornament-ridden homes of Mrs Fitzgerald and the Papafagos family. The vein of sleazy comic horror climaxes in the graveyard, as Carl and Dave blunder about trying to squeeze Mustafa in with a rotting corpse.

With a no less perfectly befuddled performance from John Clarke as Carl's unbelievably loyal mate Dave, this imagines a class of Australian males as fortyish adolescents, bullied either by their mothers or their wives, content to wallow in filth, and consistently engaging despite their burned-out life styles. As in all the best black comedies, the potentially offensive subject matter is defused by sympathetic characterisations, with Carl and Dave and Sophie signalling their strength of character by not overreacting to awful situations, instead greeting each appalling plot turn with a resigned shrug. This finally blends in with the suburban Catholicism espoused in the hilarious 'miracle' scene, and pays off in a beautifully timed monologue at the bedside of Carl's stricken mother.

Remarkably assured in the way it sustains a rather thin premise for nearly two hours, this marks an especially noteworthy debut for John Ruane, who comes from the Swinburne Film and Television School of Melbourne. With Ann Turner (*Celia*), John Hillcoat (*Ghosts of the Civil Dead*) and Richard Lowenstein (*Dogs in Space*) as other graduates, this seems to be turning out a generation of film-makers unwilling to subscribe to the deadening good taste that smothered the tactful Australian film industry of the 80s.

Kim Newman

Enchanted April

Certificate U
Distributor HBO
Production Company BBC Films
In association with Miramax Greenpoint Films
Executive Producers Mark Shivas Simon Relph
Producer Ann Scott
Production Associate Matthew Hamilton
Location Manager Terry Wright
Casting Susie Figgis
Assistant Director Mervyn Gill-Dougherty
Screenplay Peter Barnes
Based on the novel by Elizabeth von Arnim
Director of Photography Rex Maidment
In colour
Visual Effects Designer Colin Mapson
Graphics Designer Roz Dallas
Editor Dick Allen
Production Designer Malcolm Thornton
Music Richard Rodney Bennett
Costume Design Sheena Napier
Make-up Design Deanne Turner
Sound Editors David Sleight Robyn Rogers
Sound Recorder John Pritchard
Sound Re-recorder Peter Maxwell
Production Assistant Pauline Bullock-Webster

Cast
Josie Lawrence Lotty Wilkins
Miranda Richardson Rose Arbuthnot
Alfred Molina Mellersh Wilkins
Jim Broadbent Frederick Arbuthnot
Michael Kitchen George Briggs
Joan Plowright Mrs Fisher
Polly Walker Caroline Dester
Stephen Beckett Jonathan
Matthew Radford Patrick
Davide Manuli Beppo
Vittorio Duse Domenico
Adriana Facchetti Francesca
Anna Longhi Costanza

8,930 feet
99 minutes

United Kingdom 1991

Director: Mike Newell

London in the early 20s. Lotty Wilkins decides to rent a castle in Italy for a month to escape the drudgery of her marriage to Mellersh. She persuades her neighbour Rose Arbuthnot to join her. After visiting the castle's owner, George Briggs, who lives in London, to finalise arrangements, they inform their respective husbands of their plans. To help with the expense, Lotty and Rose advertise for two other women to make up a foursome. The only replies they receive are from the elderly, overbearing Mrs Fisher and the young, wealthy and beautiful Lady Caroline Dester. Lady Caroline's mother throws a party for Frederick, Rose's husband, to launch his new book. As Frederick uses a pseudonym, Caroline is unaware that he is married and that she is about to spend a month in Italy with his wife.

Lotty and Rose arrive at the castle to find that Mrs Fisher and Lady Caroline have preceded them. To Rose's annoyance, they have taken the best rooms. Lotty, enchanted by the Italian scenery, writes to Mellersh inviting him to join her. On his arrival, Mellersh is impressed by Lotty's friendship with Lady Caroline and realises he has undervalued his wife. Lotty encourages Rose to write to her husband. Rose receives no reply from Frederick. However, George Briggs arrives and, assuming Rose to be a war widow, starts to pay her attention. Flattered, Rose begins to blossom. Later, Frederick, arrives to visit Lady Caroline, unaware that Rose is also staying at the castle. When Rose sees Frederick, she assumes that he has come at her invitation and greets him warmly. Pleased by Rose's welcome, Frederick does not enlighten her.

Sensing that Briggs is disappointed that Rose is married, Lady Caroline tries to console him. Discovering that he is extremely short-sighted, she realises that she has finally found someone who will value her for more than just her looks. Mrs Fisher, too, begins to mellow and warms towards her companions. They all leave Italy looking forward to a brighter future.

Based on Elizabeth von Arnim's novel about the progress to self-realisation of four very different women under the influence of unfamiliar and exotic surroundings, *Enchanted April* appears to have suffered badly in the transition from book to film. (Originally produced for BBC TV's Screen Two series, the film has been recut for theatrical release.) It begins confidently enough, conjuring a convincing sense of London in the 20s through painstaking recreation



Miranda Richardson, out of the rain

of period detail; but once the action moves to Italy, the protagonists enter a sun-drenched, timeless idyll in which they become willing prisoners of the castle and its beautiful gardens. Even the costumes lose their authenticity: Lotty wanders around in a dress that owes as much to 60s hippy fashion as it does to 20s style.

Having evacuated all social context, the lame script and clumsy plot devices defeat even Joan Plowright and Miranda Richardson's considerable acting abilities. The subtext to this supposed tale of female rebellion is that surface appearances can be deceptive. But though the film suggests that it is the beauty and strangeness of the Italian setting that allows people to be seen for what they really are, its London-based beginning proves more enchanting. In these opening sequences, director Mike Newell shows some of the touch he displayed in *Dance with a Stranger*, creating a sympathetic and humorous portrait of two women contemplating breaking out of their unhappy existences. London is so relentlessly wet, and their respective husbands so lacking in redeeming qualities, that Lotty and Rose's plan to escape seems entirely justified.

In spite of the fact that Josie Lawrence is woefully miscast as Lotty – a role far better suited to Richardson's capabilities, while Lawrence's nervy intensity would have been more appropriate for the tight-lipped Rose – these early sequences linger in the memory, undermining the credibility of the subsequent reconciliations. The warm welcome offered to Mellersh and Frederick by their wives in Italy appears completely implausible, while Rose's sacrificing romance with the gentle and kindly Briggs for her husband really goes against the grain. As the characters optimistically depart an Italy bathed in sunlight, one is left with the feeling that in London it's still pouring with rain.

Julia Knight

Reviews

Death in Brunswick
Enchanted April

Certificate
15
Distributor
20th Century Fox
Production Companies
20th Century Fox
An All Girl production
Executive Producer
Mark Rydell
Producers
Bette Midler
Bonnie Bruckheimer
Margaret South
Co-producer
Ray Hartwick
Associate Producers
Chris Wilkinson
Kate Long
Production Co-ordinator
Pam Cornfeld
Unit Production Managers
Eduard D. Markley
Ray Hartwick
Location Manager
Richard Davis
2nd Unit Director
Chris Wilkinson
Casting
Lynn Stalmaster
Associate:
Michael Orloff
Voice:
Barbara Harris
Extras:
Central Casting
Jim Green
Cenex Casting
Sam Lynn
Assistant Directors
Alan B. Curtiss
Liz Ryan
John Rusk
Robert Huberman
2nd Unit:
Liz Ryan
Screenplay
Marshall Brickman
Neal Jimenez
Lindy Laub
Story
Neal Jimenez
Lindy Laub
Director of Photography
Stephen Goldblatt
Colour
DeLuxe
2nd Unit Photography
David Wagreich
Camera Operators
A: Steve St John
B: David Golia
2nd Unit:
Steve Smith
Steadicam Operator
Steve St John
Video
24 Frame Displays:
Video Image
Gregory L. McMurtry
Rhonda Gunner
Richard Hollander
John C. Wash
"Awards" Playback:
Steve Howard
Image Co-ordinator:
Janet Earle
Tape:
Phil Silver
Special Visual Effects
Illustration Arts
Syd Dutton
Bill Taylor
Editors
Jerry Greenberg
Jere Huggins
Production Designer
Assheton Gorton
Art Directors
Dianne Wager
Don Woodruff
Set Director
Marvin March
Art Department Co-ordinator
Kevin Constant
Set Design
Richard Lawrence
Peter R. Romero
Julia Levine

Set Dressers
Gary Daspit
Frank Flores
Gregori Renta
Randy Severino
Tommy Samona
Production Illustrator
David Negron
Photo Murals
Firooz Zahedi
Special Effects Co-ordinator
Allen Hall
Special Effects
Gary Karas
Joe Montenegro
Pat Domenico
Michael Schorr
Michael Menzel
Dale Ettema
Michael Roundy
Jay Bartus
Joao Rocha
Michael Tice
Joe Pancake
Music
Dave Grusin
Sideline Musicians Supervisor
John E. Oliver
Executive Music Producer
Joel Sill
Supervising Music Editor
Curt Sobel
Music Editor
Ellen Segal
Musical Sequences Devised by
Joe Layton
Digital Music Systems
Tim Claman
Songs
"Dreamland" by Dave Grusin, Alan Bergman, Marilyn Bergman; "Shake Me Good" by Aina Marlette, Bob Marlette, performed by Aina; "Do You Believe" by James Cammarata, Francis Preve, Michael Licata, performed by Beat Goes Bang; "Bily-a-Dick" by Hoagy Carmichael, Paul Francis Webster; "I Remember You" by Johnny Mercer, Victor Schertzinger; "Vicki and Mr Valves" by Lenny LaCroix; "P.S. I Love You" by Johnny Mercer, Gordon Jenkins; "Underneath the Arches" by Bud Flanagan; "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square" by Manning Sherwin, Eric Maschwitz; "I Apologize" by Al Goodhart, Edward G. Nelson, Al Hoffman; "The White Cliffs of Dover" by Walter Kent, Nat Burton; "Symphonie Espagnole" by Edouard Lalo, performed by Tamaki Kawkubo; "Come Rain Or Come Shine" by Johnny Mercer, Harold Arlen; "The Girlfriend of the Whirling Dervish" by Al Dubin, Johnny Mercer, Harry Warren; "Wake Up Each Morning with Baileys" by Dave Grusin, Marshall Brickman; "Dixie's Dream" by Marc Shaiman; "I'll Walk Alone" by Sammy Cahn, Jule Styne; "The More I See You" by Mack Gordon, Harry Warren; "For All We Know" by J. Fred Coots, Sam M.



Ravelling or unravelling the fabric?

Lewis; "Every Road Leads Back to You" by Diane Warren, performed by Gary LeMel; "Crossroads" by Robert Johnson, performed by Cream; "Green Onions" by Steve Cropper, Al Jackson Jr, Lewie Steinberg, Booker T. & The MG's; "Land of 1000 Dances" by Chris Kenner, Antoine Domino; "In My Life" by John Lennon, Paul McCartney; "Stuff Like That There" by Jay Livingston, Ray Evans; "Baby It's Cold Outside" by Frank Loesser
Choreographer
Joe Layton
Costume Design Supervisor
James Tyson
Costume Supervisor
Sandra B. Jordan
Key Costumers
Men:
Joe McCloskey
Women:
Michelle Kurpaska
Costumers
Diane McCloskey
Tony Velasco
Mark Weitzman
Dan Richardson
Deanne Sellner
Stephen Chudej
Bernadette O'Brien
Valerie O'Brien
Elizabeth Sortor
Nava Sadan
Amelia Craig Andrews
Bette Midler:
Pam Wise
Set Costumers:
Gilbert S. Hernandez
Diana Wilson
David Page
Make-up Artists
Frank Griffin
Ron Berkeley
Fred Blau
Dennis Liddiard
George H. Edds
Body:
Kaori Turner
Character Aging Make-up
Caglione & Drexler Inc
Designer:
John Caglione Jr
Key Make-up Artists:
Jill Rockow
Michelle Burke

Title Design
Anthony Goldschmidt
Titles/Opticals
Pacific Title
Supervising Sound Editor
Kay Rose
Sound Editors
Richard L. Oswald
Chester L. Slomka
David Spence
Gordon Davidson
Teri E. Dorman
Milton C. Burrow
Supervising ADR Editor
Victoria Sampson
ADR Editor
Linda Folk
Supervising Foley Editor
Solange Schwalbe-Boisseau
Foley Editors
Scot Tinsley
Valerie Davidson
Sound Recordists
Jim Webb
Donald O. Mitchell
Robert Schaper
Frank Montano
Walter Gest
Greg Gest
Music:
Robert Schaper
Don Murray
ADR Recordists
Thomas J. O'Connell
David Miranda
Foley Recordists
James Ashwill
Marilyn Graf
Dolby stereo
Foley
Taj Soundworks
Ed Bannon
Artists:
Kevin Bartnof
Hilda Hodges
Technical Adviser
Steve Howard
Technical Supervisors
Monte Swann
Doug Degrazzio
Music Adviser
Morgan Ames
Consultants
Music:
Arif Mardin
Song/Music:
Marc Shaiman
Medical:
Dr Walter D. Dishell

Production Assistants
Will Plyer
Susie Brubaker
Wendy Davidson
Marc Hammer
Kristie Hart
Susan Hellman
Suzanne Hilyard
Todd Leslie
Helen Mendoza
Elizabeth Pryor
Sol Rivera
Scott Robertson
Deering Rose
Amy Rydell
Nelsie Spencer
Stunt Co-ordinator
Mic Rodgers
Stunts
Chris Tuck
Greg Barnett
Eric Chambers
Steve Davison
Annie Ellis
Marcia Holley
Matt Johnston
Eric Mansker
Bennie Moore
Manny Perry
Mic Rodgers
Keith Tellez
David Burton
Doc D. Charbonneau
Doc Duhamel
Norman Howell
Buddy Joe Hooker
Gene LeBell
John Meier
Carol Neilson
Robby Robinson
Danny Rodgers
Tim Trella
Tierre Turner
Scott Wilder
Dan Wynands
William Washington
Stand-ins
Nancy Fisher
Stan Rodarte
Steve Sturia
Dan Carey
Aerial Co-ordinator
Chuck Hood

Cast
Bette Midler
Dixie Leonard
James Caan
Eddie Sparks
George Segal
Art Silver
Patrick O'Neal
Shepard
Christopher Rydell
Danny
Ayre Gross
Jeff Brooks
Norman Fell
Sam Schiff
Rosemary Murphy
Luanna Trott
Bud York
Phil
Dori Brenner
Loretta
Jack Sheldon
Wally Fields
Karen Martin
Vicki
Shannon Wilcox
Margaret Sparks
Michael Green
General Scott
Melissa Manchester
Corrine
Steven Kampmann
Stan
Richard Portnow
Milt
Pattie Darcy
Myra
Beau Dremann
Army Messenger
Jameson Rodgers
Danny, age 4
Gary Gershaw
Stage Manager
Jim Raposa
Dancing Airman
Patrick White
Audience Airman
Christopher Kaufman
Band Person
James Patrick
Captain
Chris Wilkinson
Niles LaGuardia
Andrew Bilgore
Nervous Production
Assistant
Brandon Call
Danny, age 12
Hayley Carr
Ann Sparks
Kimberley Ann
Evans
Kate Sparks
Kelly Noonan
Merry Sparks
John O'Leary
TV Censor
Stewart J. Zully
TV Stage Manager
Deborah Stern
Heidi Sorensen
Showgirls
Bruce Gray
Richardson Morse
Matthew Faison
Sponsors
Carey Eidel
Green Room Page
Richard Hochberg
Merrill
Andy Milder
Dressing-room Page
Thom Adcox
Wounded Marine
Andy Lauer
Corpsman on Battlefield
Billy Bob Thornton
Marine Sergeant
John Doolittle
Captain Donelson
Sal Landi
Marine Driver
John Ruskin
Marine Who Stops Truck
Marc Poppel
Corpsman at MASH
Gabe Bologna
Marine at MASH
Tamaki Kawakubo
Violinist
Mark Roberts
Vice Admiral
Robert Clotworthy
Navy Commander

13,023 feet
145 minutes

USA 1991

Director: Mark Rydell

● A grand televised ceremony is in preparation, at which a presidential medal will be presented to the veteran show-biz team of Eddie Sparks and Dixie Leonard. Jeff Brooks, a young assistant sent to bring Dixie to the studio, finds the old lady refusing to attend. Instead, she starts reminiscing...

1942: Dixie, singing on American radio, is summoned to England by her uncle Art Silver, who writes for the song-and-dance star Eddie Sparks. Pitchforked into the show at a US airbase, Dixie improvises some risqué dialogue with Eddie, then goes on to captivate the troops with her singing. Eddie, angered at her blue jokes, wants to fire her, but is persuaded by Art that he and Dixie will make a great team. Entertaining the troops in North Africa, Eddie secretly arranges to have Dixie's husband Michael, an army sergeant, attend the show. The couple's ecstatic reunion is captured on camera. At the end of the war, Eddie accompanies Dixie, and her young son Danny, to Michael's funeral.

1951: Eddie and Dixie have their own TV show, but Dixie's raunchy ad-libs alarm the sponsors. Dixie meanwhile is concerned about Eddie's growing influence over Danny. Without consulting her, Eddie announces a Christmas tour for the troops in Korea. In revenge, she invites Eddie's wife and daughters to join them in Tokyo. In Korea, the tour's trucks pick up wounded soldiers, one of whom dies as Dixie tends him. Shaken, she and Eddie sleep together for the only time. On Christmas Day in Tokyo, Eddie is induced by the show's sponsors to sack Art as a suspected leftist. Dixie publicly denounces Eddie, and is dropped from the show.

1969: Dixie, running a club in Los Angeles, is visited by Eddie. He persuades her to join him on tour in Vietnam where Danny, now a



Less than legend: Bette Midler

Marine captain, is serving. While they mount a show in the war zone, the Vietcong attack and Danny is killed before Dixie's eyes... To Jeff's amazement, Dixie suddenly appears dressed and ready for the ceremony. But at the studio she has a blazing row with Eddie in his dressing-room; Eddie goes on alone and almost breaks down. Hearing this, Dixie joins him on-stage, and the couple perform one last routine for the delighted audience.

● *For the Boys* kicks off with a series of shots of the Stars and Stripes, so close up that we can see the stitches. A disenchanted account of the unravelling of the American dream, or a celebration of the resilient fabric of show-biz patriotism? Well, both, as it turns out, and from start to finish the film never makes up its mind which it is to be. Instead, it tries to dissolve every contradiction in a wash of sentimental cliché, not the least threadbare of which is the flashback, as-told-to narrative framework.

These woozy attempts at audience manipulation reach their nadir in the Vietnam sequence, with Eddie and Dixie's scaled-down show in the war zone. The brutalised troops mock Eddie's naive patriotic and nearly rape the mini-skirted blonde dancer he has brought along. Dixie, though, tongue-lashes them into silence before launching into Lennon and McCartney's "In My Life". The Marines, now gentle and boyish, listen with rapt attention, one of them cuddling a Vietnamese child. As she ends, Dixie gives the peace sign. The troops respond – at which, dead on cue, the Vietcong attack. On all sides, soldiers die in sub-Peckinpah slow motion, until Dixie is left slumped in the mud cradling her dead son Danny in the classic Pietà pose.

Each time *For the Boys* starts gearing itself up to confront the crucial issue of show-business complicity in the USA's increasingly compromised politics, it backs off at the last minute. Neither of the big denunciation scenes – Dixie's outburst over the sacking of Art, or her row with Eddie in his dressing-room – packs the punch it should, thanks to a script unwilling or unable to face up to its own implications. None of this, perhaps, would matter so much if the rationale of the story – Eddie and Dixie as show-biz legend, a teaming of magical troupers fondly recalled by millions – were borne out by anything we see on stage. But some laboured repartee, a few ballads from Bette Midler, and a cautious dance routine or two sadly fail to suggest more than a small-town vaudeville act.

Philip Kemp

Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare

Certificate
18
Distributor
Guild
Production Company
New Line Cinema
Executive Producer
Michael De Luca
Producers
Robert Shaye
Aron Warner
Associate Producer
Michael Knue
Production Controller
Paddy Cullen
Unit Production Manager
Patty Whitcher
2nd Unit Manager
Paddy Cullen
Location Managers
Kristi Frankenheimer
Davis
Rick Rothen
Executive-in-charge of Post-production
Joseph Fineman
Post-production Supervisor/Co-ordinator
Ric Keeley
2nd Unit Director
Michael Knue
Casting
Jane Jenkins
Janet Hirshenson
Roger Mussenden
Extras:
Star Casting
Assistant Directors
Mike Topozian
Greg Jacobs
Michael A. McCue
Harry Jarvis
2nd Unit:
Josh King
James Cohen
Screenplay
Michael DeLuca
Story
Rachel Talalay
Based on characters created by Wes Craven
Director of Photography
Declan Quinn
In colour
2nd Unit Photography
Phil Parmet
Additional Photography
James L. Carter
Camera Operator
C. Mitchell Amundsen
Steadicam Operators
Mark O'Kane
Randy Nolen
Dan Kneec
Visual Effects
Unit Manager:
Diana Dru Botsford
Special Visual Effects
Dream Quest Images
3-D Supervision:
The Chandler Group
Process
Compositing
Hansard
Additional Optical Compositing
Hollywood Optical
Graphic/Video Displays
Video Image
Dream Demons Animation
Pacific Data Images
Editor
Janice Hampton
Additional:
Erica Huggins
Production Designer
C.J. Strawn

Art Director
James K. Barrows
Art Department Co-ordinator
Michael Kraft
Set Decorator
Rebecca Carriaga
On-set Dressers
Ted Haddwick
Mara J. Lee
2nd Unit:
Curtis Molloy
David Lear
Lead Scenic Artist
Felisa F. Finn
Scenic Artists
Susan Miscevic
Miriam Warwick
Storyboard Artist
Doug Leffer
Special Effects
Mechanical:
Reel EFX
Computer Graphic:
Video Image
House
Transformation
True Vision Effects
Snake Demon Puppets
Jim Towler
3-D Miniatures
Steson Visual Services
Music
Brian May
Music Supervisors
Bonnie Greenberg
Jill Meyers
Costume Design
Nanrose Buchman
Costume Supervisor
C. Parker Poole
Set Costumers
Hans Georg Struhar
2nd Unit:
Gamila M. Fakhry
Make-up
Suzanne Parker-Sanders
2nd Unit:
Barrie Buckner
Carla Schlesinger
Robert Englund:
Louis Lazzara
Dayne Johnson
Freddy Krueger's Make-up Effects
David B. Miller
Special Make-up Effects
Magical Media
Industries
Supervising Sound Editors
Hari Ryatt
Bruce Stubblefield
Sound Editors
Christine Danelski
H.L. Hicks
ADR Editors
Martin J. Bram
Michele Perrone
Lach Duncan
Jennifer Hortin
Foley Editors
Peter S. Elliot
Howard Gindoff
Sound Recordists
Mark Weingarten
2nd Unit:
James Thornton
Richard G.
Schexwayden
Dolby stereo
Special Sound Effects
June Johnson
Sound Effects Editors
Edward Fassl
Jeff Clark
Maciek Malish
Richard Burton
Andrei Bacha
Production Assistants
T.C. Eachus
Peggy Hughes
Dana Ostrow
Thomas C. O'Haver
Set:
Trey Batchelor
Art Department:
John Peter Bernardo
Stunt Co-ordinator
Dan Bradley

Stunts
Cedric Adams
Rick Barker
Richard L. Blackwell
Lauri Creach
Kelly Darro
Marian Green
Al Jones
Jeff Habberstad
Gary Morgan
Roger Morgan
Noon Orsatti
William Perry
Birgit Schier

Cast
Robert Englund
Freddy Krueger
Lisa Zane
Maggie Burroughs
Shon Greenblatt
John
Lezlie Deane
Tracy
Ricky Dean Logan
Carlos
Breckin Meyer
Spencer
Yaphet Kotto
Doc
Mr Tom Arnold
Childless Man
Mrs Tom Arnold
Childless Woman
Elinor Donahue
Orphanage Woman
Oprah Noodlemantra
Teenager on TV
Cassandra Rachel Friel
Little Maggie
David Dunard
Kelly
Marilyn Rockafellow
Maggie's Mother
Virginia Peters
Woman on Plane
Stella Hall
Stewardess
Lyndsey Fields
Loretta Krueger
Angelina Estrada
Carlos' Mother
Peter Spellos
Tracy's Father
Tobe Sexton
Teen Freddy
Chason Schirmer
Young Freddy
Michael McNab
Spencer's Father
Matthew Faison
Springwood Teacher
Vic Watterson
Carlease Burke
Officers
L.E. Moko
Ticket Seller
Warren Harrington
Cop in Shelter
Mel Scott-Thomas
Security Guard
Jonathan Mazer
Angry Boy

8,005 feet
89 minutes

Reviews

For the Boys
Freddy's Dead:
The Final Nightmare

USA 1991

Director: Rachel Talalay

● Springwood, ten years hence. Falling asleep on an aircraft, a teenage boy dreams of a small girl who says, "He's going to make you help him, because you're the last"; of Freddy Krueger flying on a broomstick; and that he is in a house which plummets to earth on the outskirts of Springwood. He boards a bus driven by Freddy, then wakes up at the roadside. Taken by police to a local recovery centre for disturbed adolescents, the amnesiac boy is named John Doe.

At the centre, child psychologist Maggie Burroughs has three special charges: runaway rich kid Spencer, unruly martial-arts expert Tracy (who was sexually abused by her father), and the aurally impaired Carlos. Maggie's colleague Doc learns that she and John share the same dream and suggests dream therapy. When a torn newspaper cutting headed "Krueger Woman" strikes a chord in Maggie's memory, she drives John, Tracy, Spencer and Carlos to Springwood. At the town fair, they note the absence of young children. Maggie and John visit the local school, where they find the matching half of the press cutting (giving details of Freddy's victims) and a demented teacher who tells them that Freddy Krueger had a child.

Tracy, Spencer and Carlos are drawn to Freddy's house, where Carlos falls asleep and is tortured with sounds until his head explodes. John is now convinced that he is the K. Krueger shown in the Springwood school year book. High on drugs, Spencer sleeps in front of a television and is sucked into a video game-style dream in which he is beaten to death by his father. John, Maggie and Tracy flee, but John again dreams that he is in Freddy's flying house. Maggie and Tracy visit Freddy's mother, who says she adopted him and knows nothing of his real parents. Maggie experiences a home movie-like dream in which she sees Freddy's wife discover his secret lair; then Freddy turns towards her as a child – she is in fact his daughter, Katherine Krueger.

In the centre's games room, Doc dreams about Freddy, who says the Dream People who gave him his job made him immortal. When he wakes, Doc formulates a plan which involves wearing 3-D glasses, grabbing Freddy in the dream and dragging him into the waking world. Maggie enters Freddy's memories, where she sees him picked on by other kids, indulging in self-mutilation, and being beaten by his stepfather. After seeing Freddy kill her mother, Maggie grabs him and drags him out of the dream into the Springwood police station, where

Freddy's razor-tipped glove and weapons are tagged and stored. Maggie puts on the glove and attacks Freddy, who is eventually blown up.

● When asked to comment on the death of Elvis Presley, radio DJ John Peel remarked with characteristic drollness that since Elvis had effectively died when his Svengali-like manager, Colonel Parker, made him enter the army in the early 60s, his physical demise was a mere formality. The same might be said of Freddy Krueger, whose long overdue, marketing-inspired death is more an attempt to breathe life into a long-dead corpse than a fitting end for a once vital and terrifying movie monster. The dream logic of Wes Craven's ground-breaking original has been reduced to sloppy plotting and a string of unrelated special-effects set-pieces. It is sadly apt therefore that the manner of Freddy's passing should be as unimaginative as the enervated sequels themselves.

The satisfying dénouement of Wes Craven's original saw heroine Heather Langenkamp denying Freddy's power by turning her back and refusing to believe in his existence (the sequel-facilitating scene of her mother being sucked backwards through the letter box was added later by the producers). Here we are asked to believe that a monster who has survived myriad deaths and been resurrected countless times could be disposed of with sticks of dynamite. This laziness is equally evident in the visually poor 3-D sequence, which is not only introduced on the most spurious of pretexts but also denies all narrative logic by continuing after Maggie has dragged Freddy back into the waking world.

One of the series' few strengths has been its development of the mythology which underpins Freddy's murderous mayhem. Maggie's discovery – in the home-movie dream – that she is Freddy's daughter is this film's only genuinely scary scene. One suspects, on the other hand, that the exploitation of the subject of child abuse has little to do with creative inspiration or genuine social concern. It does, however, make possible the equally calculated special-effects sequences: Freddy as Carlos' mother brandishing a giant cotton bud, imitating Spencer's violent father in the computer game, or becoming Tracy's threatening, incestuous father. If the promise of the title is kept, it may all have been worthwhile. One remembers with trepidation, however, the broken promise of *Friday the 13th – The Final Chapter*, which was followed by *Friday the 13th – A New Beginning*, and several more redundant sequels after that.

Nigel Floyd

Hors la vie



Shades of despair: Hippolyte Girardot...

Certificate

15

Distributor

Mainline

Production

Companies

Galatee Films/Films A2 (Paris)/Filmapha (Rome)/Lamy Films (Brussels)
In association with Canal Plus/Raidue Rai Radiotelevision/Investimage 2/Investimage 3/Centre National de la Cinématographie

Executive Producers

Hugues Nonn
Fabienne Tsai

Producer

Jacques Perrin

Associate Producers

Jacqueline Louis
Italy: Laura Cafiero
Salvatore Morello

Production

Managers

Catherine Pierrat
Philippe Baisadoui
Daniel Argente
Italy: Silvia Tolino
Mauro Maggioni

Casting

Romain Bremond

Screenplay

Maroun Bagdadi
Based on the book by Roger Auque, with the collaboration of Patrick Forestier

Adaptation/Dialogue

Didier Decoin
Elias Khoury
Italy: Vera Clossani

Director of

Photography

Patrick Blossier
In colour

Camera Operators

Arnaud Borrel
Jeanne-Louise Bulliard
Editor

Luc Barnier

Production Designer

Dan Weil

Set Decorators

Hamza Nasrallah
Richard Guille
Abdelnabi Krouchi
Olivier Desquinemare
Italy: Antonio Formica

Special Effects

Philippe Hubin

Music/Music

Director/

Orchestrations

Nicola Piovani

Costume Design

Magali Guidasci

Costumers

Clary Mirolo

Roberto Panfill

Make-up Artist

Odile Fourquin

Sound Editors

Dominique

Hennequin

Chantal Quaglio

Guillaume Sciamia

Dolby stereo

Sound Re-recordists

Patrice Severac

Catherine Leygonie

Armourer

Christophe Maratier

Cast

Hippolyte Girardot

Patrick Perrault

Rafic Ali Ahmad

Walid, "Chief"

Hussein Sheity

Omar

Habib Hammoud

Ali, "Philippe"

Magdi Machmouchi

Moustaph

Hassan Farhat

Ahmed,

"Frankenstein"

Hassan Zbib

Fadi

Nabila Zeitouni

Najat

Hamzah Nasrullah

"De Niro"

Sami Hawat

Hassan

Sabrina Leurquin

Isabelle

Roger Assaf

Farid

Nidal El Achkar

Mother of Khaled

Fady Abou Khalil

Ninar Esber

Maher Kassar

Philippe Moysan

Paul Mattar

Naji Assy

Ali Ballout

Frédéric Legris

Tarek Fayed

8,761 feet

97 minutes

Subtitles

...Hippolyte Girardot, Sami Hawat



France/Italy/Belgium 1991

Director: Maroun Bagdadi

French photographer Patrick Perrault is kidnapped by Arab gunmen in Beirut, blindfolded and left in a darkened room. Days later, he is questioned by two men (whom he calls the Chief and Frankenstein), but given no explanation for his kidnapping. A more friendly guard, Ali, plays dominoes with Patrick and, amused by his nicknames for his Arab captors, renames him Naoum. Patrick manages to loosen one of his boarded-up windows, and when this is discovered, he is taped from head to foot and moved across town.

At his new destination, he is met by Ali and an English-speaking Arab who claims to have been Robert De Niro's bodyguard. "De Niro" lets Patrick walk around without a blindfold and explains that he is now near the frontline. One night, a scream alerts Patrick to the possible presence of other hostages. As his unknown fellow hostage is beaten, Ali slips a photograph of Patrick's girlfriend under the door and wishes him a Happy Christmas. The next day, a buoyant De Niro informs Patrick he will be free in two weeks.

Meanwhile, Patrick offers Ali (who is improving his French in Patrick's company) the chance of French citizenship in return for his help in making an escape. The next day, Patrick is questioned by the Chief about this conversation, and is verbally abused by Frankenstein (whose real name is Ahmed) because Ali has supposedly been shot. Expecting more physical abuse, Patrick is instead told to tidy himself up for imminent release; the man who cuts his hair is none other than Ali. Patrick's transfer is interrupted by a mortar attack, however, and he finds himself being beaten up by other Arabs. Later, when asked to make a video message by De Niro, Patrick breaks down and cries out his girlfriend's name.

It turns out that he has dysentery (which is successfully treated by the Chief, now identified as Walid), and on his recovery he is chained up with no sign of immediate release. After an unsuccessful escape attempt, he is transferred to Walid's own flat, where he comforts Walid's young son during an aerial attack one night. Told that he is going to be released, an initially disbelieving Patrick finds himself being disguised in full purdah before being left alone on a beach. On the day of his departure, he learns that Ahmed (Walid's brother-in-law) has been killed. Later, in a Parisian restaurant, Patrick leaves his friends to make a phone call. In the Beirut flat from which Patrick almost escaped, the phone rings unanswered.

"What kind of fucking war is this? Israelis attack Palestinians, fine, but Palestinians and Shi'ites killing each other...?" This question is posed by Patrick Perrault at the end of the opening credit sequence, though happily writer-director Maroun Bagdadi makes no attempt to answer it, merely summarising the broader political conundrums in the first five minutes. By then, moviegoers will already have recognised the photo-journalist hero (based on real-life photographer Roger Auque, but also resuming the John Savage character in *Salvador* and Nick Nolte in *Under Fire*) and the nightmare terrain in which he works. Thereafter, *Hors la vie* plunges straight into the ordeal of its victim, chronicling 319 days of monotonous isolation (Patrick's toilet rituals are the highlight of his day) in an episodically structured, clinically precise depiction of suffering.

In fact, it is the slow build-up of tiny personal details which indicates the film's major achievement, namely, eliciting sympathy for those who, in varying degrees, are responsible for the mental torture, physical abuse and petty humiliation of an innocent victim. These details (Ali taking a child to school, Ahmed praying beside a relative's grave) are more telling than a proselytising script could be, and help to avoid any overt sentimentalising of the Arabs – and concomitant trivialisation of Perrault's suffering. As the shades of their despair become clearer, Patrick's own identity becomes increasingly anonymous. Despite Hippolyte Girardot's heroic suffering on-screen, Perrault remains essentially an everyman figure, an icon of Western values at once despised ("You lived well here... beaches, sunshine, good food, skiing in Faraya") and envied ("You're a lucky guy, you've a pretty girlfriend, you're rich, handsome and French") by his captors.

This polarity of (mis)fortunes becomes more obvious as it transpires that Patrick is more valuable to the Arabs than their fellow countrymen. And some at least of his transitory afflictions, from food ("You'll eat like us, you're no better") and water (the Lebanese only have running water during the day) to the constant bombardment, are a permanent way of life for his captors. Despite the inherent grimness of its subject, *Hors la vie* is not without moments of laconic humour. At one point, Patrick is prepared for further bad news from France, only to be told that the footballer Platini has retired. The casting of a Martin Scorsese lookalike in the part of "De Niro" ("Are you talking to me...?") must also be more than coincidence.

Farrah Anwar

Jacquot de Nantes

Certificate

PG

Distributor

Gala

Production Company

Ciné-Tamaris
With financial assistance from Canal Plus/La Sept/La Sofiarp/Centre National de la Cinématographie/Le Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication/Le Conseil Municipal de la Ville de Nantes/Le Conseil Général de Loire Atlantique/Le Conseil Régional des Pays de la Loire et l'ARPCA

Producers

Danielle Vaugon
Agnes Varda
Perrine Bauduin

Casting

Nantes:
David Pichon
Paris:
Sophie van Baren

Documentary

Co-ordinator

Mireille Henrio

Assistant Directors

Didier Rouget

Screenplay

Agnès Varda

Story

Jacques Demy

Directors of Photography

Patrick Blossier
Agnès Godard
Georges Strouvé

Part in colour

Editor

Marie-Jo Audiard

Art Directors

Robert Nardone

Olivier Radot

Music

Joanna Bruzdowicz

Music Extracts

"Que ma joie" by Johann Sebastian Bach, performed by J. Ch. Guiraud;

"Les Quatre saisons" by Antonio Vivaldi, performed by

Orchestra de Ch. de Toulouse; "Sabat Mater" by Antonio Vivaldi, performed by Livia Budai

Music performed by

Warsaw Film Orchestra

Violin: Ewa Marczyk

Saxophone: Zbigniew Jaremka

Songs

"Papa n'a pas voulu" by Mireille, J. Nohain, performed by Mireille; "Les Saltimbanques" by L. Ganne, M. Odonneau, performed by Liliane Breton; "Le Tango de Marilou" by M. Mariotti, G. Mandés; "J'attendrai..." by D. Olivieri, L. Poterat; "Les Fraises et les framboises" (traditional); "Caroline, Caroline" by V. Scotto, L. Benech, V. Telly; "Le Roi de Thulé"; "L'Air des bijoux (Faust)" by Ch. Gounod, M. Carre; "Le Petit Grégoire" by Th. Botrel; "Ça vaut mieux que d'attraper la scarlatine" by P. Misraki, H. Honez, Decoin; "Nous irons pendre notre ligne..." by J. Kennet, M. Carre, P. Misraki; "La Cucaracha" by P. Piot, H. Ithier; "Encore un petit verre de vin" by E. Mézière; "Boum", "N'y pensez pas", "Le Temps des cerises" by and performed by Charles Trénet; "Démons et Merveilles" by L. Thiriet, J. Prévert; "Tout va très bien Madame la Marquise" by P. Misraki, Pasquier, Allum, performed by Ray Ventura and his Orchestra; "La Fille de Madame Angot" by Ch. Lecoq, C. Pèr, P. Siraudia, V. Koning, performed by Mady Mesplée; "Après toi je n'aurai plus d'amour" by V. Scotto, G. Koger, performed by Tino Rossi; "Dans les Plaines du Far-West" by Ch. Humel, M. Vandair, performed by Yves Montand; "Au Chili" by L. Gasté, performed by J. Hélian and his Orchestra; "Valse Chinoise" by J. Colombo, G. Chestem; "L'Aubergerie du Cheval Blanc" by Benatzky

Puppets

Monique Creteur

Costume Design

Françoise Disle

Titles

Euro Titres

Sound Editor

Aurique Delannoy

Sound Recordists

Jean-Pierre Duret

Nicolas Naegelen

Jean-Pierre Laforce

Film Extracts

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (1937)

La Sabotier du Val-de-Loire (1955)

Lola (1960)

La Luxure (1962)

La Baie des Anges (1962)

Les Parapluies de Cherbourg (1963)

Les Demoiselles de Rochefort (1966)

Peau d'âne (1970)

Le Joueur de flûte (1971)

L'Événement le plus important depuis que l'homme a marché sur la lune (1973)

Une chambre en ville (1982)

Parking (1985)

Cast

Philippe Maron
Jacquot 1
Edouard Joubaud
Jacquot 2
Laurent Monnier
Jacquot 3
Brigitte de Villepoix
Marilou, Mother
Daniel Dublet
Raymond, Father
Clement Delaroche
Yvon 1
Rody Averty
Yvon 2
Hélène Pors
Reine 1
Marie-Sidonie Benoist
Reine 2
Julien Mitard
René 1
Jeremie Bader
René 2
Jeremie Bernard
Yannick 1
Cedric Michaud
Yannick 2
Guillaume Navaud
Cousin Joël
Fanny Lebreton
Geneviève
Jean-Charles Hernot
Guy, Workman
Edwige Dalaunay
Cousin Bella
Jacques Bourget
Monsieur Bonbons
Jean-François Lapipe
Uncle Marcel
Chantal Bezias
Aunt Nique
Marie-Anne Emeriau
Grandmother
Véronique Rodriguez
Singer
Henri Janin
Clogman
Marie-Anne Hery
Clogman's Wife
Christine Renaudin
Aunt from Rio
Yves Beauvillain
Design Teacher
Francis Viau
Night Visitor
Yvette Longis
Luce, Butcher
François Vogels
Monsieur Debuissou
Françoise Lenouveau
Madame Bredin, Upholsterer
Philippe Lenouveau
Monsieur Bredin, Upholsterer
Céline Guicheteau
Marc Barto
Yann Juhel
Carole Ferron
Aurélien Leborgne
Mathias Lepennec
Ludovic Vanneau
Friends and Teenagers

10,662 feet

118 minutes

Subtitles

France 1991

Director: Agnès Varda

● Jacques Demy died in October, 1990. During the last year of his life, he participated in the making of a film by his wife, Agnès Varda, that reconstructs the events of his childhood. Completed in early 1991, it incorporates brief reminiscences on screen by Demy himself, filmed by Varda, who also provides an occasional linking commentary.

Nantes, 1939. Eight-year-old Jacquot lives with his younger brother Yvon and his parents Marilou and Raymond, who run a garage. They are a contented family, enjoying the popular songs of the period and making frequent outings to the Theatre Graslin and the Grand Cirque. There is an unexpected invasion from a long-lost aunt from Rio, who sweeps them off to dinner and a floor-show at the brasserie La Cigale; other vivid experiences include a screening of Disney's *Snow White*, a solemn visit to the grave of Jacquot's grandfather in Champtoceaux cemetery, and the puppet shows at the Theatre Guignol in the Cours Saint Pierre. Fascinated by the puppet fairy-tales, Jacquot persuades his grandmother to sew costumes for his own model theatre, where he proudly stages "Cinderella" to a cool reception by his contemporaries.

War breaks out, and Nantes is flooded with refugees, including the provocatively playful young Geneviève. The brothers are evacuated to stay with a clog-maker and his wife in the country. During the war, Jacquot's growing fascination with the cinema is encouraged by colourful film magazines, viewings of *Les Visiteurs du soir* and *Les Enfants du Paradis*, and access to a neighbour's 9.5mm projector. By drawing images directly on to celluloid, Jacquot creates his first film, *Raid sur le Pont de Mauves*, and in triumph trades five 'Bibliothèque Verte' children's books and a meccano set for a second-hand 9.5mm camera. Following the guidance of an instruction manual, he films *L'Aventure de Solange*, a drama starring his brother and friends about a child stolen from gypsies, only to find when the film is processed that it was hopelessly over exposed. The war over, he decides that he will have to go to a film school.

His father, however, sends him to a technical college to learn how to be a motor mechanic, and Jacques continues his film experiments in an attic above the garage. He visits the cinema obsessively, develops a love of classical music, and sees his favourite cousin Reine become proudly pregnant, although unmarried.

She affectionately rejects him as too young to be a potential husband. Between 1947 and 1948, Jacques painstakingly constructs a three-minute animated film, *Attaque Nocturne*; during a promotional visit to Nantes, the director Christian-Jaque sees it and immediately recommends that young Demy should apply for entry to the Vaugirard Film School. His father at last withdraws his opposition to a film-making career, and in 1949 Jacques leaves Nantes for Paris.

● Closing the circle of his life, Jacques Demy's final film reassembles his first experiments in celluloid and returns him to the innocence that shaped them. It forms an affecting and sentimental memoir, in which the undeflectable Jacquot prepares to make his mark on the world at the same time as Jacques, in placid connivance, is letting it slip away. Caught between them, as if hoping to restore the man she knows by resurrecting the child she never met, Agnès Varda pays tribute as film historian, as filmmaker and as wife, the roles impatient with each other, jostling for space.

Sometimes she films as Demy would have done, with eloquent tracking shots, bright bursts of colour and carnival, musical phrases shared joyously among the characters. Sometimes she plays analyst, flashing forward to glimpses of a pregnant Catherine Deneuve, a puppet-theatre castle constructed full size, a roulette wheel, a flute player, an army of citizens in the streets of Nantes, to remind us that Demy's choice of images in his films was dictated with surprising frequency by the encounters of his childhood. As film buffs, like her, we are invited to spot the references. Sometimes, too, she films as Agnès Varda, documenting the resilience of wives, mothers, girlfriends, in cool and unaccusing detail, and allowing herself an affectionate irreverence.



To become puppet master (Philippe Maron)

"You and your camera are too small for me", says Reine, the girl next door. "Go back to your dreams, little Jacquot".

Part wistful, part exasperated, Varda stages this elusive awareness – never quite a romance – between the boy and his neighbouring cousin, all acrobatic grace and no-nonsense aspiration, as the primary incentive, although he never recognises it, for the young Demy's obsession with cinema. Through film, he finds a means of becoming puppet-master, controlling behaviour which in life had too often been less than amenable, and bringing an operatic logic to a world which, for the war years of his childhood, had been demonstrably disordered. But beyond this, the pragmatic Varda of *Cleo de 5 à 7* also speaks to us, wryly convinced even now that the irrational, like a German soldier intruding briefly on a picnic, has its own perverse fascination.

Could it be, after all, that she feels she didn't know him well enough? From time to time, the chronology of his youth is interrupted by intense close-ups of the 'real' Demy. At this desperate proximity his eyes no longer speak, but seem merely reflective, their attention long directed elsewhere. Defeated, Varda's camera retreats so that, with short, genial comments, Demy can give an account of himself by more conventional means.

He describes the difficulty he had with the tracking shot in his 9.5mm animated epic *Attaque Nocturne* (now lost, the film was reconstructed for *Jacquot de Nantes*), but when we see the finished product the vital movement is missing. No matter; as a tribute to so much that we will miss, now that Demy has been unable to expand the radius of his career (fifty films, he used to promise, all about the same characters), Agnès Varda assembles the music and colours of a special childhood with welcome tenderness.

Philip Strick

JFK

Certificate
15
Distributor
Warner Bros
Production Company
Warner Bros
In association with
Le Studio Canal Plus/
Regency Enterprises/
Alcor Films
Executive Producer
Arnon Milchan
Producers
A. Kitman Ho
Oliver Stone
Co-producer
Clayton Townsend
Associate Producer
Joseph Reidy
Production
Co-ordinator
Leeann Stonebreaker
Production Manager
Clayton Townsend
LA Office Manager
Art Tizon
Location Managers
Dallas:
Jeff Flach
Patricia Anne Doherty
New Orleans:
Sarah Whistler
Washington DC:
Peggy Pridemore
Post-production
Supervisor
Bill Brown
Casting
Risa Braham Garcia
Billy Hopkins
Heidi Levitt
Associates:
Suzanne Smith
Mary Vernieu
Juel Bestrop
Melanie Traylor
Dallas:
Kris Nicolau
New Orleans:
Sandra Dawes
Extras Dallas:
Kevin Howard
Assistant Directors
Joseph Reidy
Joseph R. Burns
Deborah Lupard
Screenplay
Oliver Stone
Zachary Sklar
Based on the books
Trail of the Assassins by
Jim Garrison,
Crossfire: The Plot that
Killed Kennedy by
Jim Marrs
Director of
Photography
Robert Richardson
Panavision
Colour
DuArt
Prints by Technicolor
Camera Operators
Philip Pfeiffer
Additional:
Michael McClary
Jerry G. Callaway
Steadicam Operator
James Muro
Video Playback
Peter J. Verrando
Optical Supervisor
Miller Drake
Graphics
Cynthia Pater
Editors
Joe Hutshing
Pietro Scalia
Additional:
Hank Corwin
Associate Editor
Julie Monroe
Production Designer
Victor Kempster
Art Directors
Derek R. Hill
Alan R. Tomkins
Art Department
Co-ordinators
Dallas:
Tana Bishop
New Orleans:
Kelly Curley

Set Design

Mary Finn

Set Decorator

Crispian Sallis

Lead Set Dressers

Dallas:
Phil Shirey
New Orleans:
Frank Hendrick Jnr

Set Dressers

Stephanie Emery
Mandy Brou
Jamie Maheu
David McGrath
On-set:
Scott Rosenstock
Amy Shaff

Lead Scenic Artist

Dale Haugo

Scenic Artist

John A. Kelly

Music

John Williams

Music Extracts

"Concerto No.2 for
Horn and Orchestra,
K417: I-Allegro
Maestoso" by
Wolfgang Amadeus

Mozart, performed by
Dale Clevenger, Franz

Liszt Chamber
Orchestra, Janos Rolla

Orchestrations

John Neufeld

Executive

Music Producer

Budd Carr

Music Editor

Ken Wannberg

Songs

"Drummers' Salute"
performed by The
Royal Scots Dragoon
Guards; "TV Jam"

by and performed
by Tom Hajdu. Andy

Milburn; "Muskrat
Ramble" by Edward

Ory, Ray Gilbert,
performed by

Dr Henry Levine's
Barefoot Dixieland

Philharmonic";
"Francis Blues" by

and performed by
Sidney Bechet;

"Small Dark Clouds"

by and performed
by Ed Tomney;

"On the Sunny Side
of the Street" by

Dorothy Fields,
Jimmy McHugh,

performed by Sidney
Bechet; "Scratch

My Hide"; "Tribal
Consciousness"; "Ode

to Buckwheat" by and
performed by Brent

Lewis; "A Stranger on
Earth" by Sid Feller,
Rick Ward, performed

by Dinah Washington;
"El Watusi" by and

performed by Ray
Barretto; "Cubanito"

by Luis Pla, performed
by Valladares y Su

Conjunto; "My
Bucket's Got a Hole in

It" by Clarence
Williams, performed

by Jim Robinson;
"Maybe September"

by Percy Faith, Jay
Livingston, Ray Evans,

performed by Tony
Bennett; "Tequila"

by Chuck Rio; "Kokyo"

by Leonard Eto,
performed by Kodo

Costume Design

Marlene Stewart

Costume Supervisor

Dan Bronson

Costumers

Fran Allgood
Gail Bixby
Jennifer Dixon
Key Make-up
Ron Berkeley

Make-up

Craig Berkeley
Wade Daily
Elaine Thomas
Cassandra Scott
Sissy Spacek:
Kelvin Trahan

Special Prosthetic

Effects

FXSmith

Titles/Opticals

Pacific Title

Supervising

Sound Editors

Wylie Stateman
Michael D. Wilhoit
Sound Editors
Kelly Oxford

Dialogue:

Dan Rich

Bob Newlan

Richard Dwan

David A. Arnold

Christopher Assells

Mark Gordon

Alison Fisher

Willy Allen

Hugo Weng

Supervising

ADR Editor

Avram D. Gold

ADR Editors

Mary Andrews

Jereyn Harding

Foley Editors

Sandy Berman

Meredith Gold

Mark Pappas

Sound Recordists

Tod A. Maitland

Bill Daly

Mark "Frito" Long

David Roberts

ADR Recordist

Charleen Richards

Foley Recordist

Greg Orloff

Dolby stereo

Sound Re-recordists

Michael Minkler

Gregg Landaker

Sound Effects

Editors

Scott Martin Gershin

Jay Richardson

Mark Lanza

Foley Artists

Dan O'Connell

Alicia Stevenson

Technical Advisers

Numa V. Bertel Jnr

Bob Breall

Howard K. Davis

Dale Dye

Robert Groden

Roy Hargraves

Gerald P.

Hemmings Jnr

Larry Howard

Dr Marion Jenkins

Ron Lewis

David Lifton

Jim Marrs

John Newman

Beverly Oliver

Colonel L. Fletcher

Prouty

Ellen Ray

Frank Ruiz

Gus Ruso

Perry Russo

Bob Spiegelman

John R. Stockwell

Cyril H. Wecht

Stanley White

Tom Wilson



Hard sell: Gary Oldman...

Research

Co-ordinator

Jane Rusconi

Production

Assistants

Nicholas Irwin

Dan Karkoska

Brad Keller

Tammy McGlynn

Bill Poague

John Sekula

Joey Stewart

Calvin Wimmer

Joleta Bishop

Melissa James

David Nuell Johnson

Travis Mann

Max Salassi

Elston Howard

Michael Johnson

Steve Brennan

Ron Towery

Nick Spetsiotis

Patrick Parrino

Jonathan Abrams

Set:

Tina Stauffer

Daniel Burns

Juan Ros

Dave Venghaus

Julie Herrin

Stunt Co-ordinator

Webster Whinery

Kevin Costner

Stand-in

Mark Thomason

Narrator

Martin Sheen

Cast

Kevin Costner

Jim Garrison

Gary Oldman

Lee Harvey Oswald

Sissy Spacek

Liz Garrison

Tommy Lee Jones

Clay Shaw

Laurie Metcalf

Susie Cox

Michael Rooker

Bill Broussard

Jay O. Sanders

Lou Ivon

Sally Kirkland

Rose Cheramie

Anthony Ramirez

Epileptic

Ray LePere

Zapruder

Ed Asner

Guy Banister

Jack Lemmon

Jack Martin

Vincent D'Onofrio

Bill Newman

Steve Reed

John F. Kennedy

Double

Jodi Farber

Jackie Kennedy

Columbia Dubose

Nellie Connally

Double

Randy Means

Governor Connally

Double

E.J. Morris

Cheryl Penland

Jim Gough

Plaza Witnesses

Perry R. Russo

Angry Bar Patron

Mike Longman

Alec Gifford

Bob Gunton

TV Newsmen

Pat Perkins

Mattie

Brian Doyle-Murray

Jack Ruby

Wayne Knight

Numa Bertel

Gary Grubbs

Al Oser

Beata Pozniak

Marina Oswald

Tom Howard

L.B.J.

John William Galt

L.B.J. Voice

Joe Pesci

David Ferrie

Ron Jackson

FBI Spokesman

Walter Matthau

Senator Russell Long

Sean Stone

Jasper Garrison

Amy Long

Virginia Garrison

Scott Krueger

Snapper Garrison

Allison Pratt Davis

Elizabeth Garrison

Pruitt Taylor Vince

Lee Bowers

Red Mitchell

Sergeant Harkness

Ronald von Klausen

John S. Davies

Michael Ozag

Hobos

Tony Plana

Carlos Bringuier

Tomas Millian

Leopoldo

Raul Aranas

Angelo

John Candy

Dean Andrews

John C. Martin

Prison Guard

Kevin Bacon

Willie O'Keefe

Henri Alciatore

Maitre d'

Willem Oltmans

George

DeMohrenschildt

Gail Cronauer

Janet Williams

Gary Carter

Bill Williams

Roxie M. Frnka

Earlene Roberts

Zeke Mills

J.C. Price

James N. Harrell

Sam Holland

Ray Redd

Dodd

Ellen McEliduff

Jean Hill

Sally Nystuen

Mary Moorman

Jo Anderson

Julia Ann Mercer

Marco Perella

Edwin Neal

Julia Ann Mercer

Interrogators

Spain Logue

Darryl Cox

FBI Agents with Jean

Hill

T.J. Kennedy

Jean Hill Interrogator

Carolina McCullough

Stripper

Jim Garrison

Earl Warren

J.J. Johnston

Mobster with Bill

Broussard

R. Bruce Elliott

Bolton Ford Dealer

Barry Chambers

Man at Firing Range

Linda Flores Wade

Sylvia Odio

William Larsen

Will Fritz

◀ that Oswald was duped by Clay, a military intelligence agent sent out to infiltrate fringe groups. What Garrison cannot understand is who in official circles could benefit from Kennedy's murder. On a visit to Washington, DC, he meets with a former Pentagon official, "X", who spells it out for him.

Angered by Kennedy's plans to pull out of Vietnam and spoil the post-war world's biggest potential arms bonanza, elements of the senior military command conspired with the heads of large military contractors to kill Kennedy and put the more hawkish Lyndon Johnson in the White House. Convinced now that the Kennedy assassination was in effect a *coup d'état*, Garrison returns to New Orleans and soon brings Shaw to trial. His doubts over the chances of a conviction are counterbalanced by the opportunity to lay out all his findings in public.

● A political film without politics, and one which asserts that the absolute truth can be reached through speculation and inference, *JFK* is not only Oliver Stone's most controversial effort to date but the most likely to have an impact on American political life. The US went to war in the Third World after *Platoon*; greed and avarice limped along on Wall Street after *Wall Street*; but people may actually believe in the conspiracy theories of former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison after sitting through Stone's three-hour blizzard of real and fictionalised documentary footage, bald assertions, and thriller heroics. However, in his self-avowed effort to create a 'counter-myth' to the Warren Commission Report, Stone may be guilty of fabricating as much 'evidence' as the discredited investigation overlooked.

If nothing else, *JFK* brings home just how untenable the official line on the Kennedy assassination – one assassin, one gun, three bullets – is. Stone's problem is that even though most Americans don't believe the Warren Commission, they don't believe any of the conspiracy theories that have been spun to replace it. So the director has engaged in the hard sell, daring the viewer to resist his rhetoric of finality and assurance. He opens



His way: Kevin Costner, Walter Matthau

JFK with a characteristic blend of ingenuousness and sophistication, displaying his sleight-of-hand and daring one to catch him at it in the same move.

Blown-up black-and-white footage of a woman (Sally Kirkland) being thrown from a car and then, from her hospital bed, muttering about a plot to kill Kennedy follows hard on the heels of similar-looking documentary footage of the Kennedy political history. The manipulation of documentary footage then becomes increasingly busy, with snatches of the 8mm colour Zapruder film and contemporary newsreel accounts expanded with dramatic footage whose visual quality is an exact match. Stone is equally canny with what he doesn't show. Garrison and his wife (Sissy Spacek) are seen in bed dismissively shaking their heads over a television documentary which attacked Garrison's procedures. In fact, these charges were taken much more seriously than *JFK* indicates. In general, anyone who opposes Garrison is depicted as doing so from ulterior or vested motives; no one ever fights him simply on the merits of the case.

This deck-stacking extends to the casting as well. Kevin Costner plays Garrison, as he plays practically every other character from Eliot Ness to Robin Hood, as a dignified loner going his own noble way, while the heavies, Clay Shaw and David Ferrie, are portrayed by Tommy Lee Jones – who appears sinister even when he is a good guy – and everyone's favourite psycho, Joe Pesci. These rhetorical extremes grow out of the film's curious political deficit, and though they make *JFK* an exciting entertainment – despite being three hours long, the film is expertly paced – they are symptomatic of a larger failure.

Ultimately, the film fails because it cannot supply a cohesive glue for such a desperate and long-lived conspiracy. If all that motivated the generals and executives was greed, and all their Cuban foot soldiers lived for was ideological hatred, there must have been temptation and rebukes enough over the years to produce apostates. Money and adventurism do not represent a mutuality of interests, only a convergence of desires. And, unlike political status, desire waxes and wanes. Stone's urgent technique is exactly what this subject – the murder of a president by high officials – calls for. Criticised for making dogmatic and literary films, Stone at all times produces a pure and personal cinema. What animates *JFK* is an individual sense of outrage communicated in flashy visual terms. More dogma would have added the needed persuasiveness.

Henry Sheehan

K2



Individual & team: Michael Biehn, Matt Craven

Certificate

15

Distributor

Entertainment

Production Company

Trans Pacific Films

In association with

Majestic Films

International

Executive Producers

Melvyn J. Estrin

Hal Weiner

Producers

Jonathan Taplin

Marilyn Weiner

Tim Van Rellim

Associate Producer

Masa Mikage

Production

Kevin O'Driscoll

Supervising

Production

Joe Sala

Co-ordinator

Dick Allen

Production

Yvonne Melville

Production

Managers

George Grieve

Pakistan:

Ed Harper

Ali Ghazanfar

Unit Managers

Tracey Jeffrey

2nd Unit:

Stephen A. Janisch

Michelle McLaren

Location Managers

Waddington/Whistler:

Robin Mounsey

Vancouver:

Alan Barwell-Clarke

Pakistan:

Ejaz Ahmed

Casting

Victoria Thomas

Vancouver:

Michelle Allen

Extras:

Carmen Ruiz-Laza

Assistant Directors

John Watson

Richard Coleman

Kenna Marshall-

Pitman

Pakistan:

David Daniels

Screenplay

Patrick Meyers

Scott Roberts

Based on the play by

Patrick Meyers

Director of

Photography

Gabriel Beristain

Colour

Technicolor

2nd Unit

Photography

Peter Pilafian

John Clothier

Camera Operators

Vancouver/Whistler:

Attila Szalay

Waddington:

Gabriel Beristain

Opticals

GSE

Peter Govey

The Optical

Partnership

Editor

Sean Barton

Production Designer

Andrew Sanders

Supervising

Art Director

Richard Hudolin

Art Directors

Stephen Simmonds

S.M. Anwar

2nd:

K. Sharukh Hamid

Set Decorator

Tedd Kuchera

Set Dresser

Gord Brunner

Scenic Artist

Joe Sala

Storyboard Artist

Dick Allen

Special Effects

Co-ordinator:

John Thomas

Shop Foreman:

Don Bard Leask

Main Unit:

Stewart Bradley

Music

Chaz Jankel

Costume Design

Kathryn Morrison

Wardrobe

Keith Denny

Costumers

David Lisle

Lynn Talbot

Titles

Plume Partners

Supervising

Sound Editor

Martin Evans

Sound Editor

Michael Crouch

ADR Editor

Jon Hussien

Sound Recordists

David Stephenson

Music:

Martin Rodriguez

Mark Wolfson

Dolby stereo

Sound Re-recorder

Robin O'Donoghue

Foley

Jenny Lee Wright

Pauline Griffiths

Office Production

Assistants

Suzanne Daley

Rhonda Legge

Stunt Doubles

Dean Lockwood

J.J. Makaro

Michael Langlois

Lou Bollo

Mark Aisbett

Climbing Doubles

Michael Biehn:

Bruce Kay

Tom Herbert

Barry Blanchard

Luca Bercovici:

David Alexander

Hiroshi Fujioka:

Dan Redford

Raymond J. Barry:

Dave Dunaway

Patricia Charbonneau:

Meagan Routley

Helicopter Pilot

Lawrence Perry

Cast

Michael Biehn

Taylor Brooks

Matt Craven

Harold Jamieson

Raymond J. Barry

Phillip Claiborne

Hiroshi Fujioka

Takane Shimuzu

Luca Bercovici

Dallas Woolf

Patricia

Charbonneau

Jacki Metcalfe

Julia Nickson-Soul

Cindy

Jamal Shah

Malik

Annie Grindlay

Lisa

Elena Stiteler

Tracey

Blu Mankuma

Man in Wheelchair

Charles Oberman

Tony

Christopher Brown

Carl

Leslie Carlson

Dexter

David Cubitt

Peter

Edward Spatt

Mike

Andrew Spatt

Todd

Anthony Holland

Priest

Kehli O'Byrne

Pam

Lillian Carlson

Secretary

Laurie Briscoe

Handsome Woman

Badi Uzzaman

Ibrahim

Rajab Shah

Ibrahmim Zahid

Ali Ka

Ali Khan

Abdul Karim

Ghulam Abbas

Asghar Khan

Mr Shaban

Balti Porters

Nazir Sabir

Shah Jehan

Balti Liaison Officers

Tim Van Rellim

Steiner

Gabrielle Dellal

Frenchwoman

Hadji Mejd

Lambardar

9,985 feet

111 minutes

USA 1991

Director: Franc Roddam

Two climbing friends, Harold, a serious, quiet science professor, and fun-loving bachelor attorney Taylor, are planning an expedition. Harold's wife Cindy feels he is neglecting her and their son and fears for his life. On their climb, Taylor and Harold meet a rich veteran climber Claiborne, who is organising a climb with Dallas Woolf, an ambitious assistant district attorney, Japanese climber Takane Shimuzu, and Claiborne's girlfriend, Jacki Metcalfe. That night on the mountain, Claiborne's party arrogantly ignore Harold's warning about the avalanche danger where they have camped. Next morning, an aeroplane causes an avalanche and two members of Claiborne's party are killed. Harold and Taylor rescue Claiborne, Dallas and Jacki.

At the funeral, Taylor discovers that Claiborne is planning an assault on K2 and badgers him to take himself and Harold along. Claiborne finally agrees, but only takes Harold because Taylor insists. Against the wishes of his wife and knowing he may jeopardise his research career, Harold agrees to go. On the way to K2, they have problems with the porters, and they encounter another team returning with a dead climber. As Taylor tries to comfort the dead man's wife, Dallas accuses him of attempting to seduce her and the two men fight. Later, on the glacier, a bridge collapses but Harold's quick reactions save the climbers.

When the porters turn back before reaching base camp, Taylor insists that they should tackle the mountain quickly and not worry about the equipment. Dallas and Taylor set up initial camps and Claiborne and Jacki stay at base camp. Claiborne climbs up to join the others but is taken ill and has to return to base. Taylor, Harold, Takane and Dallas establish the final camp and decide to try for the summit. But Dallas and Takane resolve to carry on without Taylor, while Harold is angry that Taylor would have been willing to leave him behind.

Takane returns after falling in terrible weather and dies; Dallas has been lost. Taylor and Harold shed all their equipment and reach the summit. On the descent in bad weather, they fall and Harold breaks his leg. He begs Taylor to leave him and reconciles himself to death. But as Taylor carries on down the mountain, he finds Dallas' frozen body; taking his ropes and equipment, he returns to fetch Harold. Claiborne has been ferried out for hospital with Jacki, but the helicopter spots Taylor and Harold

and picks them up from the mountainside.

K2 begins as mindlessly as it means to – and does – go on. House music pumps from a nightclub as our two climbing buddies, Harold and Taylor, pick up two rather silly girls. Harold is professorial, loving, thoughtful (without doubt Green) and leaves both girls to Taylor, who is a dare-devilish, ambitious, one-for-the-ladies (without doubt Republican). In fact, K2 is another attempt to exorcise the recent yuppie past, its transgressions in this case being absolved in the snow and ice of the mountain tops (intimations of Oliver Reed's Gerald in *Women in Love* frozen to death on the Alps and, most memorably and traumatically, Robert Taylor's similar fate in the wasteland of *The Last Hunt*).

There is a good idea here but it is buried somewhere in the wonderfully shot snow, for climbing has always embraced two opposing ideas of itself as a 'sport'. On the one hand, it fulfils the ideal of collectivism with its team-work, roping together and crucial trust in the man feeding out the rope, in short, Harold; but equally it is about the solitary narcissistic individual pitting himself or herself against nature (Taylor's Hobbesian yuppiness). Hence many films about climbing involve spies, the betrayal of the collective or the ruthless purity of nature, ego and death. Alas, Taylor's ambition is petty and his betrayal of Harold is neither profound nor unexpected, more like a lover's momentary forgetfulness.

As a sport coming out of nineteenth-century Romanticism and middle-class boredom, climbing remains one of the last outlets of the modern-day scoundrel. After all, it was the German cinema of the 30s which produced the mountaineering genre. Disappointingly, given such rich pickings, K2 settles for a lacklustre 'boys own' yarn in which the 'civilised' virtues of science, the family, government grants and salaries and swotty looks win out against finance capital, bachelorhood, promiscuity and film-star looks. The cast stagger under the banality of the script, which barely raises a Freudian flicker with its incipient homosexuality, pricelessly condensed in the expression "giving good belay" (Taylor to Harold) and ending with our yuppie throwing himself on his friend's ice-stiffening body with the words, "I love you Harold!". The only woman in the film – the millionaire leader's mistress, we presume – never gets beyond base camp and the poverty-stricken porters are represented as utterly revolting.

Michael O'Pray

Little Man Tate

Certificate
PG
Distributor
Columbia Tri-Star
Production Company
Orion
Executive Producer
Randy Stone
Producers
Scott Rudin
Peggy Rajska
Production Co-ordinator
Lisa Bradley
Production Manager
Carol Cuddy
Location Manager
Michael Williams
Post-production Supervisor
Mary F. Jansen
2nd Unit Director
Peggy Rajska
Casting
Avy Kaufman
Lina Todd
Extras
Anita Daugherty
Assistant Directors
Mike Tapoozian
Greg Jacobs
Mike McCue
Harry Jarvis
2nd Unit Joe Camp III
Screenplay
Scott Frank
Director of Photography
Mike Southon
Colour
DeLuxe
2nd Unit Director of Photography
John Thomas
Supervising Sound Editors
Norval D. Crutcher
Gilberto Costa Nunes
Sound Editors
Mark Rathaus
G. W. Davis
Sam Crutcher
Joanna Jimenez
Reinhard Schreiner
Barbara Vickers
ADR Editor
Norto Sepulveda
Sound Recordists
Douglas Axtell
Post-production:
Suzanne Geary
Mark "Frito" Long
Music:
Steven Krause
Dolby stereo
ADR Recordists
Charleen Richards
Robert Deschaine
Foley Recordist
Gregg Orloff
Sound Re-recordists
Michael Minkler
Greg Landaker
Foley Artists
Dan O'Connell
Alicia Stevenson
Production Assistants
Craig Denton
Ann McDermott
Kris Nielsen
Marcia Oney
Mary Seguin
Stunt Co-ordinator
Christine Baur
Stunts
Charles Croughwell
Gary Jensen
Stunt Doubles
Adam Hann-Byrd
Chris Thomas
P. J. Ochlan
Derek McFadden
Animal Handlers
Dawn Animal Agency

Music Performed by
Piano:
David Goldblatt
Trumpet:
Mark Isham
Trombone:
Ken Kugler
Violin:
Sid Page
Saxophone:
Bob Shepherd
Bass:
Tom Warrington
Drums:
Kurt Wortman
Music Editor
Tom Carlson
Classical Music Consultant
Daniel Troob
Songs
"I Get a Kick Out of You" by Cole Porter, performed by Ella Fitzgerald; "What the World Needs Now Is Love" by Burt Bacharach, Hal David
Costume Design
Susan Lyall
Wardrobe Supervisor:
Elizabeth Feldbauer
Make-up
Julie Hewett
Title and Sequence Effects Design
Phill Norman
Titles/Opticals
Pacific Title
Sound Design
John Thomas
Supervising Sound Editors
Norval D. Crutcher
Gilberto Costa Nunes
Sound Editors
Mark Rathaus
G. W. Davis
Sam Crutcher
Joanna Jimenez
Reinhard Schreiner
Barbara Vickers
ADR Editor
Norto Sepulveda
Sound Recordists
Douglas Axtell
Post-production:
Suzanne Geary
Mark "Frito" Long
Music:
Steven Krause
Dolby stereo
ADR Recordists
Charleen Richards
Robert Deschaine
Foley Recordist
Gregg Orloff
Sound Re-recordists
Michael Minkler
Greg Landaker
Foley Artists
Dan O'Connell
Alicia Stevenson
Production Assistants
Craig Denton
Ann McDermott
Kris Nielsen
Marcia Oney
Mary Seguin
Stunt Co-ordinator
Christine Baur
Stunts
Charles Croughwell
Gary Jensen
Stunt Doubles
Adam Hann-Byrd
Chris Thomas
P. J. Ochlan
Derek McFadden
Animal Handlers
Dawn Animal Agency

Cast
Jodie Foster
Dede Tate
Dianne Wiest
Dr Jane Grierson
Adam Hann-Byrd
Fred Tate
Harry Connick Jr
Eddie
David Pierce
Garth
Debi Mazar
Gina
P. J. Ochlan
Damon Wells
Alex Lee
Fred aged 2
Michael Shulman
Matt Montini
Nathan Lee
Matt's Team-mate
Celia Weston
Miss Nimvel
Danitra Vance
Clinic Doctor
Richard Fredette
Bartender
George Plimpton
Winston F. Buckner
Jennifer Trier
Grierson Institute Teacher
John Bell
Joey X
Ishe Costa
Cherry Reynolds
Chuck Ocampo
Bob Yee
Richard Hanson
Mar Ya Zuke
"Odyssey of the Mind" Leaders
Mark Lienhart
Fenton
Lauren Ashley
Stacey
Valerie
Josh Mostel
Physics Professor
Michael Mantell
Coral Bay Owner
Erica Staton
Girl Outside Classroom
Michael Keavey
Auctioneer
Carolyn Lawrence
Sorority Girl
George Kaufman
Eddie's Friend
Gordon Greene
Fred's Doctor
Barry J. Williams
Preppy Guy in Cafeteria
Alexandra Auder
Eddie's Girlfriend
Sam Womelsdorf
Eddie's Room-mate
Ellen McEluff
Make-up Woman
Adam Midkiff
Evan
Sheadrick Richards
Elizabeth Frietsch
"Livewire" Guests

8,918 feet
99 minutes

USA, 1991

Director: Jodie Foster

Fred Tate is the extraordinarily gifted son of single parent and waitress Dede Tate. When Dr Jane Grierson, a former child prodigy herself and an expert in the subject, hears about his abilities, she invites Fred to her institute for tests. Jane informs Dede that she would like Fred to take part in a mental olympics event, *The Odyssey of the Mind*. Dede refuses; but later, after no one turns up to Fred's birthday party, she changes her mind.

Fred and a group of other gifted children accompany Jane and colleague Garth to the camp where they enjoy various mind-stretching games. Fred befriends Damon, a genius mathematician. At the end of the event, Fred returns home happy and fulfilled. He begins to find school and home life dull. Jane visits Fred and Dede and announces that she would like to write a book about Fred, and proposes taking him to university summer school. Dede, however, plans to accompany her friend Gina to a Miami hotel where they hope to have summer jobs as dancers. Although she wants Fred to come with her, she realises that the summer school will be better for him.

Fred goes to stay with Jane and starts campus life. One afternoon, he is accidentally knocked down by Eddie, a debonair student who later befriends Fred and teaches him to play jazz and pool. Fred and Jane are asked to appear on a TV talk show about gifted children, which prevents Fred from joining his mother to celebrate Independence Day. The night before the show, Fred has a nightmare and tries unsuccessfully to phone his mother. During the broadcast, Fred misbehaves and walks out of the studio. Dede sees him on TV and decides to fly back to town. She finds Fred alone in their apartment. Jane turns up but leaves when she sees mother and son reunited.

Months later, Dede throws a party for Fred's eighth birthday; this time he has many guests, including Jane, who has finished her book about little man Tate. As a birthday present, she gives him a toy truck. Later, Fred informs us that his status as star child prodigy is eclipsed by a six-year-old who has made it to law school.

With *Little Man Tate*, Jodie Foster joins the small band of actresses – from Lillian Gish and Mary Pickford to Ida Lupino, Elaine May and Barbra Streisand – who have crossed the line to take a place behind camera. On the whole, she has made a thoughtful first film with an idiosyncratic style that successfully captures a child's

memory of one year in his life. Foster's choice of subject for her debut venture might seem unfashionable, but it is singularly close to home for someone who was once a child star herself and who enjoyed a close relationship with her own single-parent mother.

Foster's affinity with the precocious Fred and his sense of isolation is palpable, but she is able to look dispassionately at the phenomenon and also to adopt a jaunty and playful approach. She and scriptwriter Scott Frank (who also penned *Dead Again*) both enjoy the comic potential of the situation, preventing the story from collapsing into a wearisome problem-of-the-week-style TV movie, but just holding it back from the edge of farce. In this, Foster is immensely aided by Adam Hann-Byrd as the miraculous homunculus Fred, who brings just the right amount of comical solemnity to the role of the world-weary kid.

But the film also examines the central mother-child relationship. The tone is set in the opening credits sequence depicting Dede in a state of post-natal bliss as Ella Fitzgerald sings "I Get a Kick Out of You", and reinforced in a later scene in which Dede dances with her young son. Father figures are notably absent: the surrogate Eddie teaches Fred about jazz and pool, but renounces responsibility when it is inconvenient. Unusually, Fred's lack of a father is not presented as a problem (he is jokingly referred to as an immaculate conception). Nor does the plot contrive, Hollywood-style, to find his mother a partner (the quest of *Many a Precocious Infant* from *The Courtship of Eddie's Father* to *Look Who's Talking*).

Interestingly, it is another woman, Jane, who intervenes in the mother-son romance, providing an uneasy guardianship which proves to be equally important to Fred's development. While the differences between the intellectual Jane and the working-class Dede are too laboured (Jane has an orderly régime of Mozart, macrobiotic food, spotless kitchen and neatly tailored suits, while Dede enjoys swing, take-outs and thrift-shop chic), the film does not set them crudely at odds with one another.

Instead, these two 'mothers' together evoke the complexity of maternal love – each is needed, and despised, by Fred, but neither is ever disavowed. The initial competition between them is finally rendered absurd and is resolved in the concluding party scene, where Jane also gets to dance with Fred. Thus Foster gives a thoroughly unorthodox twist to the conventional 'happy families' scenario.

Lizzie Francke

The Monk

Certificate
15
Distributor
Arrow
Production Companies
Celtic Films (London)/
Mediterraneo Cine-TV
(Madrid)
Producers
Muir Sutherland
Paco Lara
Production Supervisor
Salvador Gines
Production Co-ordinator
Cindy Winter
Production Manager
Gonzalo Jimenez
Casting
John Hubbard
Assistant Directors
Yousaf Bokhari
Aitor M.de Lecea
Screenplay
Paco Lara
Based on the novel
by M.G. Lewis
Director of Photography
Angel Luis Fernandez
In colour
Editor
José Luis Matesanz
Production Designer
Gumersindo Andres
Special Effects Supervisor
Alberto Nombela
Special Effects
Molina
Music/Music Director
Anton Garcia Abril
Costume Design
Lorenzo Collado
Costume Supervisor
Sara Fernandez
Make-up Supervisor
Fernando Florido
Titles/Opticals
Fotofilm
Sound Editor
Paco Peramos
ADR Editor
David Humphries
Sound Recordist
Roy Charman

Cast
Paul McGann
Father Lorenzo
Sophie Ward
Juan/Matilde
Isla Blair
Mother Agueda
Freda Dowie
Sister Ursula
Aitana Sanchez-Gijon
Sister Ines
Laura Davenport
Dona Elvira
Suzanne Bertish
Sister Mariana
Mark Elstob
Ramon
Manuel de Blas
Inquisitor
Luis Hostalot
Captain
Josefa Sarsa
Sister Camila
Fulgencio Saturno
Father Pablo
Caspar Cano
Antonio
Manuel Pereiro
Prior
Concha Hidalgo
Nun
Luis Maluenda
Spokesman
Stuart Sutherland
Lucas
Javier Serrano
Novice
Carlos Velasco
Lorenzo Collado
Exorcists
Marina Saura
Jacinta
Sophie Linfield
Angela

9,549 feet
106 minutes

United Kingdom/Spain 1990

Director: Paco Lara

Madrid, 1767. Father Lorenzo is dismayed to learn that his young novice Juan is in fact a woman; Matilde, a wealthy heiress, has fallen in love with Lorenzo's passionate sermonising and has disguised herself to gain entry to his monastery. In the neighbouring nunnery, Sister Ines is sentenced to life imprisonment by the corrupt lesbian Mother Agueda when it is revealed that Ines has become pregnant by her former lover Ramon, from whom she was separated by Ramon's jealous parents. Despite the pleas of Sister Ursula, Ines is banished to the nunnery crypt by



Cartoonish: Sophie Ward...

Agueda, under the guise of saving her from the wrath of the Inquisition.

In the monastery, Lorenzo is bitten by a venomous snake but saved by Matilde who secretly sucks the poison from his veins, thus poisoning herself. Bewitched, Lorenzo makes love to Matilde and consents to a sorcerous act which will save her and allow the couple to continue their illicit affair. The spell is performed in the nuns' crypt where Lorenzo stumbles on the imprisoned Ines.

While visiting the ailing Dona Elvira in town, Lorenzo becomes infatuated with her daughter, Angela. Ramon brings to the nunnery a papal dispensation freeing Ines from her vows, but is told by Agueda that Ines is dead. Rejected by Lorenzo, Matilde casts a spell which will send Angela into a deep sleep, during which Lorenzo can satisfy his desire. The plan backfires when Dona Elvira interrupts Lorenzo's nocturnal pursuits, and he smothers and kills her. To save Lorenzo, Matilde brews a potion which causes death-like symptoms, putting Angela into a forty-eight-hour trance. The authorities believe her death to have been caused by poison, administered by the grief-stricken and dying Dona Elvira who is presumed to have subsequently

committed suicide.

In the crypt, Lorenzo untombs Angela but is interrupted by the arrival of soldiers brought by Ramon to free Ines. The Inquisition finds Agueda guilty of heresy and executes her. In his cell, Lorenzo is tempted by an apparition which incites him to save himself through sorcery by calling upon "the master". At the stake, Lorenzo repents and dies a Christian. 'Juan' is set free.

● Freely adapted from M.G. Lewis' plodding, early-Gothic novel, Paco Lara's colourful romp is in many ways a homage and throwback to the golden days of AIP. Shot almost entirely on stage sets, and lit in a self-consciously stylised manner (deep red hues among the lurking shadows, creating an aura of camp malevolence), *The Monk* bears a close physical resemblance to Corman's Poe adaptations of the early 60s. With British stalwart Paul McGann in the title role, the film also seems frequently to be tipping its hat to the straight-faced, bloodless splendour of early Hammer.

Where Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing once solemnly debated the nature of evil against a backdrop of carved-foam castle walls, McGann lends weight to the script's otherwise preposterous philosophical musings. His efforts notwithstanding, *The Monk* retains a healthy sense of parody: this is a cartoonish world in which women may pass for men (although Sophie Ward never looks anything other than wholly female) and love and passion may be inflamed or extinguished in an instant. By adopting a resolutely dead-pan approach to his source material, Lara turns a morality tale into an immoral extravaganza, and a plea for spiritual redemption into an exotic catalogue of damning delights.

Mark Kermode

My Girl



Macaulay Culkin, Anna Chlumsky

Certificate

PG

Distributor

Columbia Tri-Star

Production Company

Columbia Pictures

A Brian Grazer/

Imagine Films

Entertainment

production

Executive Producers

Joseph M. Caracciolo

David T. Friendly

Producer

Brian Grazer

Associate Producer

Hannah Gold

Production

Co-ordinator

Wendi Haas

Unit Production

Manager

Joseph M. Caracciolo

Location Manager

John Garrett

Casting

Mary Colquhoun

Voice:

Burt Sharp

Florida:

Ellen Jacoby

Assistant Directors

Robert V. Girolami

Christopher Stola

Douglas S. Ornstein

Screenplay

Laurice Elehwany

Director of

Photography

Paul Elliott

Colour

Technicolor

Camera Operator

Chris Squires

Editors

Wendy Green

Bricmont

Additional:

Kimberly Bennett

Production Designer

Joseph T. Garrity

Art Director

Pat Tagliaferro

Set Director

Linda Allen

On-set Dresser

Mathew Sullivan

Music

James Newton

Howard

Musical Director

Marty Paich

Orchestrations

Brad Dechter

Chris Boardman

Music Editor

Thomas Kramer

Songs

"My Girl" by William

Robinson, Ronald

White, performed

by The Temptations;

"Bad Moon Rising",

"Run Through the

Jungle" by John

C. Fogerty, performed

by Creedence

Clearwater Revival;

"Caliope Rag",

"Carousel Gal",

"Carousel March"

by Ken Wannberg;

"Do Wah Diddy

Diddy" by Jeff Barry,

Ellie Greenwich;

"Good Lovin'" by Rudy

Clark, Arthur Resnick,

performed by The

Rascals; "Hot Fun in

the Summertime"

by Sylvester Stewart,

performed by Sly and

The Family Stone;

"I Got Rhythm" by

George Gershwin,

Ira Gershwin; "I Only

Have Eyes for You"

by Harry Warren, Al

Dubin, performed by

The Flamingos; "I Saw

the Light" by and

performed by Todd

Rundgren; "I'm Just

Wild About Harry"

by Eubie Blake, Noble

Sissle; "It Never Rains

in Southern

California" by Albert

Hammond, Michael

Hazelwood,

performed by Albert

Hammond; "Maru-

Bihag" performed

by Ravi Shankar;

"Moonglow" by Will

Hudson, Eddie

DeLange, Irving Mills,

performed by Artie

Shaw; "More Today

Than Yesterday"

by Patrick Upton,

performed by Spiral

Starecase; "The Name

Game" by Lincoln

Chase, Shirley

Elliston; "One for My

Baby (And One More

for the Road)" by

Johnny Mercer, Harold

Arlen; "Saturday in

the Park" by Robert

Lamm, performed

by Chicago; "Wedding

Bell Blues" by Laura

Nyro, performed by

The Fifth Dimension;

"Wildflower" by Doug

Edwards, David

Richardson,

performed by Skylark;

"Witch Doctor" by

Ross Bagdasarian

Costume Design

Karen Patch

Wardrobe

Men:

Kimberly Carlton

Women:

Kelly Webb

Make-up

Allen Weisinger

Titles/Opticals

Cinema Research

Corporation

Supervising

Sound Editors

Tom McCarthy

Roxanne Jones

Sound Editors

Harry Chaney

Mark LaPointe

John Wild

Victor B. Lackey

Don S. Walden

ADR Editors

David B. Cohn

R. J. Kizer

Sound Recordist

Steve C. Aaron

Dolby stereo

Sound Re-recordists

Gregory H. Watkins

Carlos De Larios

Bill W. Benton

Music:

Dennis Sands

Technical Adviser

Bees:

Dr Norman Gary

Stunt Co-ordinators

Artie Malesci

Jeff Moldovan

Stunts

Patti Muxo

John Zimmerman

Cast

Dan Aykroyd

Harry Sultenfuss

Jamie Lee Curtis

Shelly DeVoto

Macaulay Culkin

Thomas J. Sennett

Anna Chlumsky

Vada Sultenfuss

Richard Masur

Phil Sultenfuss

Griffin Dunne

Mr Bixler

Ann Nelson

Gramoo Sultenfuss

Peter Michael Goetz

Dr Welty

Jane Hallaren

Nurse Randall

Anthony Jones

Arthur

Tom Villard

Justin

Lara Steinick

Ronda

Kristian Truelsen

Charles

Dave Caprita

Ray

Jody Wilson

Mrs Hunsaker

Linda Perri

Betty

Nancy L. Chlumsky

Jackie

Glenda Chism

Thomas J.'s Mother

Bill Cordell

Thomas J.'s Father

Ray Buktenica

Danny

George Colangelo

Ralph

Anthony Finazzo

Howie

Shane Obedzinski

Billy

Zachary McLemore

Zack

T.J. Collazo

Boy

Cassi Abel

Judy

Amanda Cole

Bree Butler

Girls

Harvey Bellman

Bingo Announcer

John De Russey

Vernon

Henry Kohn

Carl

Florence Mistrot

Margie

Anthony Giaimo

Edgar Allan Poe IV

Carnival Barkers

Robert Girolami

George

Kurt Smildsin

Policeman

Paul Nagel Jr

Minister

Lynn Sellers

Suzanne

9,192 feet

102 minutes

USA 1991

Director: Howard Zieff

● Pennsylvania, 1972. Eleven-year-old Vada Sultenfuss, a self confessed hypochondriac, lives with her widowed father Harry and senile grandmother above dad's funeral parlour. During the summer holidays, Vada spends most of her time with her best friend Thomas J. Sennett, who accompanies her on her regular visits to the doctor. Meanwhile, Harry hires cosmetologist Shelly DeVoto, who drifts into town in her camper van, to assist in making up the corpses. Vada tells her father that she wants to attend an adult creative writing summer school run by her teacher Mr Bixler, on whom she has a secret crush. Harry refuses to give her the fee. Later, Vada becomes hysterical when she is accidentally shut in the mortuary. Shelly calms her down, berating Harry for not paying Vada enough attention. Vada subsequently steals money from Shelly's van to pay for her writing class.

Shelly and Harry become more friendly. Finally, Harry asks her out on a date - his first since his wife died. Vada persuades Thomas J. to help her spy on them. During the evening, Harry tells Shelly that Vada's mother died in childbirth. Shelly is later invited to the Sultenfusses' Fourth of July celebrations. Vada is concerned that Shelly and her dad are becoming close. While Vada and Thomas J. are on a wood ramble, they stumble on a bees' nest and beat a hasty retreat. In the panic, Vada loses her favourite ring. That night, Vada accompanies Harry and Shelly to a fun fair where they tell her that they are going to be married. Vada is distraught and particularly resentful of Shelly. But the latter proves to be a sympathetic friend when Vada's first period starts.

Vada tells Thomas J. about the impending wedding and they attempt a coy kiss. Later, when Thomas J. goes back to the wood to find her ring, he is fatally stung by the bees. Vada is inconsolable. She runs away from the funeral and bumps into Mr Bixler. She tells him that she is in love with him, but feels further betrayed when he reveals that he too is getting married. Later that night, she returns home. She is comforted by her father, and finally admits that she believes that she caused her mother's death. After a period of mourning for her friend, Vada returns to her writing class where she reads a poem about Thomas J.

● In spite of its youthful protagonists, *My Girl* is not really kids' stuff. The morbid preoccupations, early 70s setting (jokes about Nixon, *The Partridge* ►

◀ Family versus *The Brady Bunch*, women's lib and hippy culture), and late 60s and early 70s soundtrack are there to tickle the memory of an adult audience. However, the film does not only set out to evoke nostalgic pleasures. Vada's pre-adolescent crisis conjures the painful experiences of a motherless child of the sexual revolution who has to learn to become a girl.

With its aspirant scribe heroine and Motown golden oldie title, *My Girl* at first looks like a companion-piece to Rob Reiner's *Stand by Me*. But whereas in Reiner's movie the childhood story is unravelled by the adult writer, *My Girl* maintains the child's perspective. Vada's ironic voice-over provides a caustic humour which prevents the rite-of-passage from becoming too sentimental. On other occasions it creates genuine emotional resonance, as Vada confesses her most profound fears. Indeed, it is to the audience that Vada first confides her terrible belief that she killed her mother.

Vada's childhood is more anxious years than *Wonder Years* – and her home is hardly a sanctuary. The shambling, gloomy house-cum-funeral parlour in which the odd-ball Sultenfuss entourage lives is positively Gothic. Comatose Granny springs spasmodically into action to belt out the occasional old show-biz number, while dad lavishes more attention on his corpses than on his daughter. Vada might as well be home alone.

The arrival of the free-spirited Shelly, a hip divorcee who lives in a camper van, brings the wind of change. When Harry nervously starts dating her, his brother cautions him: "Something happened called the sexual revolution". But while this confuses Harry, it is more significant for Vada. The stepmother proves to be the good fairy who brings Vada's father back from the dead and into his daughter's life.

As in all fairy-tales, Shelly's true colours are only revealed after a combative challenge. Vada first adores her, then must hate her (her hostility is tellingly conveyed in a scene where the unsuspecting Shelly is the target of Vada's vindictive game of bumper cars) before harmony can be restored. This new female presence in Vada's life also brings with it some unpleasant realities. Coinciding with the advent of her period, Vada's tomboy days are traumatically terminated with the cruel death of her comrade-in-arms Thomas J. The final image of an emotionally mature, but also more girlishly aware heroine cycling along with her new-found female friend leaves one with the feeling that the spirited Vada faces a precarious future.

Lizzie Francke

The People Under the Stairs

Certificate
18
Distributor
UIP
Production Company
Universal
An Alive Films
production
Executive Producers
Shep Gordon
Wes Craven
Producers
Marianne Maddalena
Stuart M. Besser
Co-producer
Dixie Capp
Associate Producer
Peter Foster
Production
Co-ordinator
Sarah James Arbeid
Unit Production
Manager
Stuart M. Besser
Location Manager
Judson Neil Schwartz
Post-production
Co-ordinator
Yvonne Valdez
2nd Unit Director
Peter Chesney
Casting
Eileen Knight
Extras:
The Casting Group
Rick Montgomery
Assistant Directors
Nick Mastandrea
Rosemary C. Cremona
Melanie Knox
Screenplay
Wes Craven
Director of
Photography
Sandi Sissel
Colour
DeLuxe
2nd Unit Director
of Photography
Tony Cutrono
Camera Operators
George Billinger
Additional:
Chris Hayes
Steadicam
Operators
Dan Kneec
Jeff Mart
Video Playback
Intervideo
Opticals
Howard Anderson
Editors
James Coblenz
Additional:
Tom Walls
Production Designer
Bryan Jones
Art Director
Steven Lloyd Shroyer
Set Decorator
Molly Flanegin
On-set Dresser
Daniel M. Butts
Storyboard Artist
Philip Mayor
Special Effects
Image
Engineering, Inc
Supervisors:
Peter Chesney
Gregory Nicotero
Robert Kurtzman
Howard Berger
Key Co-ordinator:
Dean Miller
Projects Co-ordinator:
Kate Steinberg
Technicians:
J.D. Street
Sandy Stewart
Key:
Mark Maitre
Earl Ellis

Mechanical
Dog Effects
Robert Clark
Roark Productions
Crew:
Camilla Henneman
Rikelle Kerr
Mark Goldberg
Jim McLaughlin
Mark Goodell
Kent Jones
Fibreglass Moulds
Make Believe
Productions
Music
Don Peake
Additional Orchestral:
Graeme Ravell
Music Extracts
"Threnody to the
Victims of Hiroshima
for 52 String
Instruments" by
K. Penderecki,
performed by
The National
Philharmonic
Orchestra in Warsaw,
(conductor)
Witold Rowicki
Music Editor
Dick Bernstein
Songs
"Do the Right Thing"
by David "Redhead"
Guppy, Markell Riley,
performed by
Redhead Kingpin and
The FBI; "Lullaby for a
Little Tree"
Costume Design
Ileana Meltzer
Wardrobe
Supervisor
Tim Wegman
Set Costumer
Yvette M. Walsh
Make-up
Michelle Buhler
Special Make-up
Effects
KNB
Title Design
Kathie Broyles
Jeff Okun
Supervising
Sound Editor
Paul Clay
Sound Editors
Carin Rogers
Susan Kurtz
Jeff Sandler
Mike Szackmeister
Rick Bozeat
ADR Editors
Pat Somerset
Ernesto Mas
Sound Recordists
Donald Summer
ADR Recordist
Tanya Sharp David
Foley Recordist
Karin Roulo
Dolby stereo
Consultant:
Steve F. B. Smith
Supervising
Sound Re-recordist
Peter Reale
Sound Re-recordists
Howard Wilmarth
Robert Doheny

Foley Artists
Diane Marshall
Jerry Trent
Production
Assistants
Jim Goldthwait
Crystal Weaver
Catherine Anderson
Jon Davis
Fabio Golombek
Richard Edgar
Rollins IV
Post-production:
Anne Trumbore
Stunt Co-ordinator
Tony Cecere
Stunts
Linda Arvidson
Marian E. Green
Kelsey Devoreaux
Beth Nufer
Sandy Gimpel
Paula Moody
Birgit K. Schier
Melvin Jones
Lori Lynn Ross
Eric Mansker
Dane Farwell
John Branagan
Dan Rycerz
Rex Lee Waddell
Lynn Salvatori
Jeff Habberstad
William R. Perry
Stand-ins
Wanda Welch
David Riggons
Julie Mondin
Sean Lemar
Roxanne "Rocky"
Meyers
Van Johnson
Head Animal Trainer
Roger Schumacher
Animal Trainers
Jim Dew
Angelo Rivers

Cast
Brandon Adams
Poindexter Williams,
"Fool"
Everett McGill
Man
Wendy Robie
Woman
A.J. Langer
Alice
Ving Rhames
Leroy
Sean Whalen
Roach
Bill Cobbs
Grandpa Booker
Kelly Jo Minter
Ruby
Jeremy Roberts
Spenser
Conni Marie
Brazelton
Mary
Joshua Cox
Young Cop
John Hostetter
Veteran Cop
John Mahon
Police Sergeant
Teresa Velarde
Social Worker
George R. Parker
Attic Cop
Yan Birch
Stairmaster
Wayne Daniels
Michael Kopelow
Stairpeople
Brutus
Bubba
Schultz
Zeke
Prince
Nick Cramer
Robert Michael
Earl Dax
David Robinson
Gregory Kavtzer
Daniel Windtree
Burton Pierce
The People Under
the Stairs

9,191 feet
102 minutes

USA 1991

Director: Wes Craven

Poindexter Williams, a thirteen-year-old black kid known as Fool, is persuaded by Leroy, his sister's boyfriend, to help rob the home of the Robesons, the landlords who are about to evict Fool's family to make way for high-profit redevelopment. Leroy's white friend Spenser, disguised as a meter reader, gains entrance to the heavily fortified mansion. When the Woman of the house leaves, Leroy and Fool break in and look for Spenser, whom Fool finds dead and partially eaten in the cellar, where strange creatures lurk.

Woman returns with Man, who shoots Leroy dead. Fool takes refuge with Alice, who has been imprisoned by Woman and Man in their quest for a 'perfect daughter'. He learns that the people in the cellar are would-be 'sons', kidnapped by the couple but since rejected. Alice passes Fool on to Roach, who lives in the walls; he is killed helping Fool make his way to the roof. Promising to return for Alice, Fool jumps from the roof and escapes.

Days later, Fool anonymously tips off the police that the Robesons are child abusers. While the couple – who are brother and sister, not husband and wife – attempt to impress the investigating officers, Fool sneaks into the house and liberates Alice and the cellar people. The mutilated 'sons' kill Woman, while Man pursues Fool into the booby-trapped room where the pair have stashed the wealth appropriated from the neighbourhood. Fool tricks Man into setting off his own dynamite and Man is killed in the explosion. The money rains down on the gathered ghetto inhabitants. Fool and Alice escape, and the cellar people gradually merge into the crowd.

Wes Craven's career has seesawed between the relative heights of *A Nightmare on Elm Street* and *The Serpent and the Rainbow*, and



Return to the corrupt heart

The Pleasure Principle

the depths of *Deadly Friend* and *Shocker*. With *The People Under the Stairs* (which is not only his most frightening horror picture since *The Hills Have Eyes* but a welcome return to the thematic density of those early films), it swings upward once more. This movie needs no 'bad dream' cutaways to liven up the flagging action. Its youthful hero is trapped in a truly nightmarish version of the Addams Family mansion, a booby-trapped funhouse which is also the corrupt heart of America. The setting is at once claustrophobic and expansive, offering many opportunities for effective scare tactics.

Craven's blurring in his early films of the boundaries between 'monstrous' and 'normal' families led to a penetrating and cynical vision of post-Vietnam/Watergate/Nixon America. This theme, almost eclipsed in his recent, fantastical horror movies, is resurrected here in inverted form. The 'family' represented by Man and Woman and their 'children' parodies those values embodied in the earlier films' heroes, whose inner violence only emerged under pressure of attack from the marginalised and abused psychotics. The latter have been transformed here into ghetto-dwelling blacks forced by poverty into crime. If anything, these 'socially relevant' aspects are too laboured, as if Craven had cribbed Robin Wood's comments about his work to lend weight to a formula old-dark-house horror picture.

Evidently inspired by an actual incident which took place in Santa Monica in the 70s, *The People Under the Stairs* avoids playing up the sado-erotic elements, and simply hints at the experiences of the cellar-dwelling mutants. As Man and Woman, Everett McGill and Wendy Robie – reunited after their double act on *Twin Peaks* – are among Craven's best monsters, funny and bizarre yet genuinely frightening. Explicitly linking their insanity to inner-city decline, Craven uses the horror genre to attack the complacency of the Reagan-Bush era, unashamedly identifying with the forgotten, the homeless and the disenfranchised.

Satisfyingly, the ending of *The People Under the Stairs* pulls no punches in a bid for possible sequels, and there are no last-minute return-from-the-dead cheap shots. Instead, Craven achieves a quietly eerie effect as the dazed mutants filter back into society. This revival of the plot-driven, exhausting, funny-pointed, suspense-horror picture is a welcome change from the flip, sequel-generating product that has characterised the horror film in the late 80s and early 90s.

Kim Newman

Certificate
18
Distributor
Palace Pictures
Production Company
Palace Pictures
In association with
Psychology News
Executive Producers
Stephen Woolley
Robert Jones
Producer
David Cohen
Co-producers
Jan Euden
Joe McAllister
Alistair Fraser
Production Executives
Jan Euden
Alistair Fraser
Production Supervisor
Cecilia Breton
Post-production Supervisor
Amanda Posey
Casting
Sarah Campbell
Nicholas Cohen
Assistant Director
Tracy Lane
Screenplay
David Cohen
Director of Photography
Andrew Spellar
Colour
Metrocolor
Editor
Joe McAllister
Production Designer
Cecilia Breton
Set Dresser
Zita Davies
Music
Sonny Southon
Music Performed by
Sonny Southon
Terry Devine-King
Songs
"Pleasure Principle",
"Be Mine", "The Real
Thing", "I Don't Come
Any Other Way" by and
performed by Sonny
Southon
Costume Design
Jackie Parry
Make-up
Design:
Sheelagh Wells
Artists:
Joanna Nettledon
Heather Jones
Titles
Nigel Robiette
Sound Editors
Bill Hopkins
Georges Meisner
Sound Recordist
Albert Bailey
Sound Re-recordist
Colin Martin

Cast
Peter Firth
Dick
Lynsey Baxter
Sammy
Hadyn Gwynne
Judith
Lysette Anthony
Charlotte
Sara Mair-Thomas
Anne
Ian Hogg
Malcolm
Francesca Folan
Mrs Malcolm
Liam McDermott
Clamper
Stephen Finlay
Gordon Warnecke
Cliff Parisi
Policemen
Patrick Tidmarsh
Yob
Chris Knowles
Peter
Lauren Tauben
Betty
Mark Carroll
Bridegroom
Sarah Campbell
Linda
Chloe Davies
Girl He Never Made
It With
Tim Mason
Guy Lowe

9,033 feet
100 minutes

United Kingdom 1991

Director: David Cohen

London. Dick, a medical journalist in his mid-thirties, is having an affair with Judith, a brain surgeon. They quarrel one afternoon when Dick has to cancel an arrangement after he remembers that he is supposed to be seeing his children from his first marriage. Dick waits at home for his ex-wife Anne, who finally arrives with the children and her girlfriend. Dick escorts the children to a party then visits Judith to try to patch things up. As he arrives, another man leaves.

He spends the afternoon with Judith then dashes off to collect the children. After a number of mishaps, he arrives late and helps Sammy, the hostess, to clear up. She invites him to stay for supper and they eventually wind up in bed. The next morning, Sammy's unpleasant ex-husband Malcolm turns up with his new wife. There is an altercation between the two men in which Dick triumphs, to the applause of the two women. Dick returns home with the children and is advised by Anne to be more responsible towards Sammy.

Dick and Sammy start spending more time together, while unknowingly they are being followed by Judith. She later visits Dick and they have sex; Dick lies to her about seeing another woman. Sammy subsequently discovers a bottle of perfume that Judith has planted in Dick's bathroom. Charlotte, a friend of Judith's, rings Dick to tell him that Judith is getting married. Dick goes to see Judith at work to demand an explanation. She tells him that she knows about Sammy, and hints that marriage shouldn't preclude them from seeing each other.

Dick attends the wedding, where he picks up Charlotte and starts dating her as well as Sammy. His precarious balancing act is disrupted when Judith contrives to bring Sammy round to his flat while he is with Charlotte (who pretends that Dick is seriously ill). All the women

berate Dick. Anne later turns up and offers some sympathetic advice; Dick decides that he loves Sammy and goes in search of her. She accepts him back, trusting that he will be faithful to her in the future.

"I wrote it because I think that it's important for men to make some kind of response to feminism". So proudly claims the producer, writer and director of this presumptuous enterprise. But the story of Dick (nudge, nudge, wink, wink) and his women is no more than a mock battle of the sexes waged in the bedroom. It's a swinging 90s story in which little seems to have changed since the 60s version, except that the women do now have careers and personalities. But only just. Judith the brain surgeon is a cool and clinical hoarder of secrets; Anne has become a sardonic feminist-lesbian who goes on conferences about South-East Asia. It's not surprising then that Dick finally chooses to settle down with the coyly sweet and nurturing Sammy, the one woman who apparently doesn't have a profession.

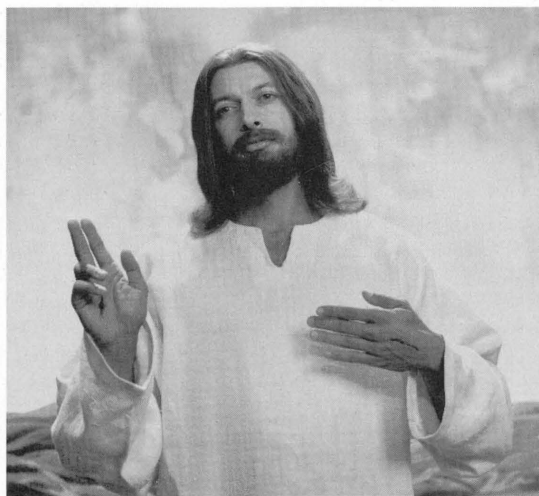
While David Cohen evidently wants these women to be sympathetic, they emerge as merely irritating. In this 'thinking man's' sex romp, the proclamations about sexual politics are of the most banal and regressive sort. It takes ninety-odd minutes to conclude that men and women want sex for different reasons and that they will never really understand each other. A few shots of advertising hoardings confirm that it is the media who perpetuate myths of masculinity and femininity, but unsurprisingly the one poster that we don't see is for the AIDS awareness campaign, nor does our medical journalist hero seem too knowledgeable on the subject. Cohen conveniently sidesteps the one issue that would seem crucial in a contemporary comedy about sexual relationships. The safe-sex romp remains to be made.

Lizzie Francke



Misunderstanding: Lysette Anthony

Rue Saint-Sulpice (The Favour, the Watch and the Very Big Fish)



In vain: Jeff Goldblum...

Certificate

15

Distributor

Rank

Production

Films Ariane/

Fildebrec (Paris)/

Umbrella Films

(London)

In association with

Sovereign Pictures

Executive Producer

Antoine de Clermont-

Tonnerre

Producer

Michelle de Broca

Co-producer

Simon Perry

Production

Co-ordinator

Simone Escoffier

Production Manager

Patrick Jaquillard

Unit Managers

Jean-Yves Asselin

Location:

Jean-Pierre Toffolon

Casting

Margot Capelier

Florence Dugowson

Extras:

Albert Litchi

Assistant Directors

Eric Sliman

Amal Bedjaoui

Screenplay

Ben Lewin

Based on the short

story "Rue Saint-

Sulpice" by Marcel

Aymé

Director of

Photography

Bernard Zitzermann

In colour

Camera Operator

Guy Famechon

Steadicam Operator

Jacques Monge

Optical Effects

Excalibur

Editor

John Grover

Production Designer

Carlos Conti

Set Decorator

Frederic Pesquer

Set Dresser

Alain Pitrel

Draughtswoman

Florence Guiraud

Sculptures

Nicolas Diaz

Maria Lago

Vincent Gazier

Isabelle Lemonnier

François Laffitte

Magali Roux

Francis Poirier

Carole Metzner

Special Effects

Pierre Fouray

Georges Demetrau

Pascal Sentenac

Jean Cathala

Gregoire Delage

Philippe Weis

Olivier Zenenski

Marie-Claire Toffolon

Music/Music Director

Vladimir Cosma

Song

"Delight" by Vladimir

Cosma, Jeff Jordan,

performed by Tania

Geddi, Jean-Marc Ivaldi

Costume Design

Elisabeth Tavernier

Wardrobe

Brigitte Laleouse

Make-up Artists

Françoise Chapuis

Gill Robillard

Catherine Ruault

Jacky Bouban

Stephane Helle

Sound Editor

Vernon Messenger

Sound Recordist

Edward Tise

Dolby stereo

Sound Re-recordists

John Hayward

Graham Hartstone

Nicolas Le Messurier

Sound Effects

Jean-Pierre Lelong

Researcher

Sophie Meriem

Stunt Supervisor

Daniel Verité

Stunts

Sara Kingston

Dan Schwarz

Christian Hening

Gilles Conseil

Patrick Steltzer

Alain Guerillot

Michael Anderson

Francis Guerillot

Animal Trainer

Pierre Cadeac/

Animal Vision

Cast

Bob Hoskins

Louis Aubinard

Jeff Goldblum

Pianist

Natasha Richardson

Sybil

Michel Blanc

Norbert Normat

Jacques Villeret

Charles, Lingerie Man

Angela Pleasence

Elizabeth

Jean-Pierre Cassel

Zalman

Samuel Chaimovitch

Grandfather

Sacha Viskouloff

Violinist

Claudine Mavros

Mother Superior

Carlos Kloster

Archbishop

Yvonne Constant

Prostitute

Martine Ferriere

Mother of Lingerie

Man

Gerald Morales

Yannick Evelyn

Drivers

Jacques Herlin

Hook-nose Man

Eric Averlant

Taxi Driver

Gérard Zalberg

Released Prisoner

Daniel Lombart

Porno Dubbing Man

Jean-Michel Ribes

Beggar

Artus de Penguern

Saint Francis

Beth McFadden

Birthday Party Girl

Louba Guertchikoff

Janine Darcey

Mireille Franchino

Mado Maurin

Gillette Barbier

Old Women in Park

Nicolas di Giacomo

Boy in Lingerie Shop

Jean-Claude Deret

Grandfather

Pamela Goldblum

Woman in Metro

Maximilien Seide

Boy in Metro

Claire Magnin

Mother in Metro

Gisele Soban

John Arnold

Passers-by

Philippe Dormoy

Cinema Ticket Boy

Maurice Herman

Edouard Hastings

Michel Sebban

Jean-François Vlerick

Geoffrey Carey

Apostles

Caroline Jacquin

Sound Studio

Receptionist

Patrick Albenque

Sound Engineer

André Chaumeau

Ice Cream Vendor

Denys Fouquerey

Prison Café Waiter

Caroline Loeb

Shabby Café Waitress

Lylia Dalskaia

Singer

Fedeale Papalia

Sleazy Bar Barman

Louis Navarre

Baker

Anne Levy

Baker's Wife

Jacques Potin

Hilton McConnico

Cinema Patrons

Sylvie Laporte

Coat Saleswoman

Julien Calderbank

Blind Boy

Dhan Olivier

Jungle Man

Jenny Legros

Jungle Woman

Jean-Claude Gillet

Arab Fishmonger

Fazia Boussoffara

Mustapha's Wife

Charles-André Eisler

Canal Tramp

Oleg Ponomarenko

Pascal de Loutchek

Russian Cabaret

Musicians

John Arnold

Gisele Soban

Metro Gapers

7,986 feet

89 minutes

English version

France/United Kingdom 1991

Director: Ben Lewin

Louis Aubinard scrapes a living as a photographer of devotional pictures for Norbert Normat's religious artefacts shop on the Rue St Sulpice in Paris. Norbert charges him with finding a new Christ model urgently; meanwhile, Louis' John the Baptist, his friend Zalman, is laid up with flu and asks him a favour: could he stand in for him at a movie dubbing session. On his way home that evening, Louis spies a swordfish in a fishmonger's. He brings it home and his sister puts it through the shredder for their evening meal.

The next morning, Louis turns up at the dubbing theatre and is seated in front of a microphone next to Sybil. When the lights go down and the film starts to roll, Sybil begins to groan and writhe in orgasmic ecstasy. Louis enters into the spirit of the event and when the sex scene is finished they wander off together. Sybil tells him about her past, and in particular about a strange incident that took place three years ago, when she was a waitress in a plush restaurant...

One evening, an obnoxious child offers her an expensive watch if she can make the pianist smile. Although he is still grieving for his dead mother, the pianist forces a smile for Sybil's sake, and she determines to make him happy. She is on the verge of seducing him when her period breaks. She assures him it will be worth waiting a few days, and that night he plays with special passion. The same thing happens on successive nights, but on the last night a violinist enters the restaurant and his playing sweeps Sybil off her feet. The pianist's violent outburst lands him in jail for three years. He is now due to be released, and the entranced Louis buys Sybil a chic coat (she complains she has nothing to wear) and agrees to accompany her



...Bob Hoskins

to the prison gates.

Sybil never arrives, but Louis fortuitously meets a man perfect for his Christ. He says his name is Franz Schubert; he and Louis become friends. They have both been betrayed by a woman, although they do not realise it is the same woman. Meanwhile, Sybil tries to contact Louis but finds Zalman's room instead, and makes her declaration of love through a locked door to the wrong man. The bewildered pianist becomes increasingly convinced that he is in fact Christ. Realising that Sybil is the woman in Louis' life, he resolves to kill her, but coming across her praying in a church he grants forgiveness. Later, he drowns in the Seine trying to walk on water. Louis and Sybil are finally reunited at the première of the porn movie they dubbed. Their misunderstandings are resolved, when she notices the watch he has borrowed from his Christ..

As its title suggests, *The Favour, the Watch and the Very Big Fish* is a film very much amused by its own bravado. Expanded and updated from a ten-page Marcel Aymé short story "Rue Saint-Sulpice" by Polish-born, Australian-raised director Ben Lewin, it's both a blasphemous comedy and a bizarre romance. Aymé wrote the story in the 30s and Lewin first read it twenty-five years ago in Melbourne. Ostensibly, his film is set in contemporary Paris, but with its multi-national, English-speaking cast, there is no sense of a world beyond the frame.

Also lacking any dramatic or thematic core, it remains essentially two (short) films. There is the Louis/Sybil romance, which starts with the favour and simulated sex, proceeds to introductions, and then conspires to keep them apart until the end. And there is the watch, the pianist's story (essentially Aymé's story) about a model for devotional pictures who comes to believe he is the Son of God.

And what of the very big fish? This is the nonsense element which binds them. Taking his cue from Aymé, Lewin contrives a masterly network of coincidence, so that, for instance, the pianist applies to work at Louis' studio just when they are looking for a Christ. Or more outrageously, as the pianist goes through the motions of laying his hands on a blind child, the child is struck by a miscued golf ball and healed as if by God. Less felicitous are the complications devised to keep the lovers apart; the scene where Sybil declares her love through a door to a perplexed Zalman, for instance. Coming after *Jesus of Montreal* - recalled even before the pianist's story by the dubbing scene - *The Favour, the Watch and the Very Big Fish* is too faux-naïf to be persuasive.

Tom Charity

Tales from the Darkside: The Movie

Certificate
18
Distributor
Columbia Tri-Star
Production Company
Paramount
Producers
Richard P. Rubinstein
Mitchell Galin
Co-producer
David Kappes
Production Controller
Diane Vilagi
Production Co-ordinator
Vivian Guardino
Unit Production Manager
Victoria Westhead
Location Manager
Brian Greenbaum
Post-production Supervisor
Scott Vickrey
Casting
Voice:
Barbara Harris
Extras:
Sylvia Fay
Assistant Directors
Mary Beth Hagner
Amelia Villero
Rosemary Cremona
Screenplay
"The Wraparound Story"
"Lover's Vow"
"Lot 249":
Michael McDowell
"Cat from Hell":
George Romero
"Lot 249" based on the story by
Arthur Conan Doyle
"Cat from Hell" based on the story by
Stephen King
Director of Photography
Robert Draper
Colour
Technicolor
Camera Operator
Robert Draper
Special Visual Effects
"Lover's Vow"
Supervisor:
Ernest Farino
Photography:
David Stipes
Anthony Doublin
Stop Motion
Animation:
Justin Kohn
Puppet Fabrication:
Michael Burnett
Optical Supervisor:
Betzy Bromberg
Special Optical Effects
Van der Veer Photo
Effects
Editor
Harry B. Miller III
Production Designer
Ruth Ammon
Art Director
Jocelyne Beaudoin
Set Decorator
Jacqueline Jacobson
Set Dresser
Joseph Conway
Artwork
Robert Siegler
Mike Rees
Scenic Artists
Lead:
Phillip Schneider
Teresa Mastropierro
André Solomita
Special Effects Consultant
Dick Smith
Special Effects Supervisor
Drew Jiritano
Music
"Wraparound Story":
Donald A. Rubinstein
"Lot 249":
Jim Manzie
Pat Regan
"Cat from Hell":
Chaz Jankel
"Lover's Vow":
John Harrison



End in apathy

Music Extracts
"Flute Quartet Allegro" by Franz Krommer
Songs
"Original Theme from *Tales from the Darkside*" by Donald A. Rubinstein, Erica Lindsay; "The Way of All Flesh" by and performed by Jim Manzie
Costume Design
Ida Gearon
Wardrobe
Audrey Ellen Lamb
Make-up
Nancy Tong
Special Make-up Effects
Supervisors:
Robert Kurtzman
Greg Nicotero
Howard Berger
Crew:
Mark Rappaport
Mecki Heussen
Scott Oshita
Bill Basso
Mark Tavares
Bruce Spaulding
Fuller
Steve Frakes
Brian Wade
Wayne Toth
Charlie Matula
Anne "Winky" Kraus
Supervising Sound Editors
Harry B. Miller III
Barry Rubinow
Sound Editors
Peter Austin
Kelley Baker
Ed Lachmann
Greg Sanders
Sound Recordists
Brit Warner
ADR:
Weldon Brown
Michael Cerone
Dolby stereo
Sound Re-recordists
Paul Sharpe
Robert Glass
Don Digirolamo
The Looping Group
Greg Finley
Barbara Iley
Daamen J. Krall
Christina G. MacGregor
David McCharen
Linda Phillips
David J. Randolph
Noreen Reardon
Production Assistants
Sherry Greenberg
Ann R. Ritchie
Lisa Alkofer
James Silverman
Veronica DePadro
Michelle Chojewski
Jeff de la Rosa
Robert Lau
Adam Rosenberg

Stunt Co-ordinator
Edgard Mourino
Stunts
Lynn Walsh
Michael Deak
Animal Trainers
Brian McMillan
Stacy Regan

Cast
"The Wraparound Story":
Deborah Harry
Betty
David Forrester
Priest
Matthew Lawrence
Timmy
"Lot 249":
Christian Slater
Andy
Robert Sedgwick
Lee
Steve Buscemi
Edward Bellingham
Donald Van Horn
Moving Man
Michael Deak
Mummy
Julianne Moore
Susan
George Guidall
Museum Director
Kathleen Chalfant
Dean
Ralph Marrero
Cabbie
"Cat from Hell":
David Johansen
Halston
Paul Greene
Cabbie
William Hickey
Drogan
Alice Drummond
Carolyn
Delores Sutton
Amanda
Mark Margolis
Gage
"Lover's Vow":
James Remar
Preston
Ashton Wise
Jer
Philip Lenkowsky
Maddox
Robert Klein
Wyatt
Rae Dawn Chong
Carola
Joe Dabernigo
Larry Silvestri
Policemen
Donna Davidge
Gallery Patron
Nicole Leach
Margaret
Daniel Harrison
John
Joel Valentine
Gargoyle Voice

8,383 feet
93 minutes

USA 1991

Director: John Harrison

Assembling the provisions for one of her celebrated dinner parties, charming housewife Betty meets with resistance from the meat course, Timmy, a small boy she has been fattening up in her dungeon-larder. Desperate to postpone his incarceration in Betty's oven, Timmy diverts her with stories from a favourite book, *Tales from the Darkside*...

Graduate student Edward Bellingham plans revenge on fellow students Lee and Susan, who have cheated him out of a university scholarship. A collector of antiques, he acquires 'Lot 249', a three-thousand year-old coffin. Inside its mummified occupant, Bellingham finds a scroll with the incantation that brings the mummy back to life, and he sends it to eviscerate first Lee and then Susan. But Susan's brother Andy, also a student, avenges their deaths by cutting the mummy to bits and threatening to kill Bellingham unless the scroll is destroyed. Bellingham tricks him into burning the wrong scroll and gets away, but the mummified remains of Lee and Susan are soon at his door to rip him apart.

Reclusive millionaire Drogan summons hit man Halston to his mansion for an unusual assignment: he is to kill the black cat that has already murdered Drogan's sister Amanda, her friend Carolyn, and their butler Gage. Drogan is convinced he will be next; he explains that he made his money from a wonder drug for heart problems, and that laboratory testing cost the lives of some five thousand cats. The black cat, he says, has come to punish him. Left alone in the mansion with his prey, Halston is tormented and terrified by the cat, which finally leaps into his mouth and chews its way down to his stomach. When Drogan returns, the animal squirms out from Halston's face and the millionaire dies of heart failure.

Struggling New York artist Preston is warned by his agent, Wyatt, that nobody is buying his work. After drowning his sorrows in a bar, Preston leaves as the bartender, locking up, is torn to pieces by a monstrous demon. The monster agrees to spare Preston's life so long as he promises never to tell anyone what he has witnessed. Wandering dazedly home, the artist meets a beautiful girl, Carola, and takes her under his protection; they become lovers and in time, thanks to her contacts in the art world, Carola helps him to become a success. On the tenth anniversary of their meeting, Preston tells her the truth about that night. Desolate that his promise has been broken, Carola

reveals that she is the monster; assisted by their demonic offspring, she tears Preston's throat out...

Betty calls a regretful halt to Timmy's anecdotes; it is time for his roasting. But Timmy trips her, grabs her keys, and shoves her into the oven in his place. He munches a biscuit as her screams fade.

As a first feature from John Harrison (who has previously directed eight episodes of the *Tales from the Darkside* television series), this has, as horror films go, an encouraging pedigree. Harrison assisted George Romero with the similar portmanteau thriller *Creepshow* and the final part of Romero's trilogy, *Day of the Dead*, also composing the music for both films. In return, Romero wrote the "Cat from Hell" episode for *Tales from the Darkside*, based on a piece by Stephen King; the other two episodes and the linking 'wraparound' fragment were scripted by Michael McDowell, who wrote *Beetlejuice* and co-wrote Neil Jordan's *High Spirits*. Given that McDowell's inspiration for the opening story, "Lot 249", was a vintage tale of the macabre by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, everything seems promisingly to be in the right hands.

As it turns out, few of the hands are playing in unison, and Harrison vainly attempts to inflict some semblance of style on a largely intractable, contemptuously illogical rag-bag of excuses for special-effect excess. Observers of Tom Savini's influence on Romero's work may respond to the ingenuities of former Savini assistants Greg Nicotero and Howard Berger, while the distinguished 'make-up illusions' of veteran Dick Smith have underscored American film and television drama for decades. But the rending of flesh that punctuates each episode is so extravagantly disgusting that the senses are quickly stirred not to admiration but to apathy.

Harrison attempts a different texture for each story: static camera and sidewise editing for "Lot 249" (which lends it, along with the Conan Doyle names, an oddly antiquated implausibility), Cormanese colours and flashbacks for "Cat from Hell", and a punkish wasteland gloss to "Lover's Vow". But when the brittle humour of the preface (the victim chirpily helps his captor to calculate how long he'll need cooking) gives way to more gruesome moods, script and direction soon stampede out of control. None of the texts makes sense, none of the participants makes ingratiating company, and the reasoning behind the final, most spectacular yarn is conclusively impenetrable.

Philip Strick

Certificate
(Not yet issued)
Distributor
Palace Pictures
Production Companies
Bioskop Film
(Munich)/Action
Films (Paris)
In association with
Stefi 2 Home Video/
Hellas (Athens)
Supported by
Eurimages Fund of the
Council of Europe/
Bavarian Film Fund/
French Ministry
of Culture and
Communication
Executive Producers
Bodo Scriba
Greece:
Vassilis Katsoufis
Producer
Eberhard Junkersdorf
Line Producer
Alexander v. Eschwege
Associate Producer
France:
Klaus Hellwig
Production Supervisors
France:
Raphael Serrail
Germany:
Arno Ortmair
Italy:
Giuseppe Auriemma
USA:
Cecil Kramer
Production Co-ordinators
Germany:
Daniela Stibitz
USA:
Jeffrey Kiehlauch
Production Managers
France:
Sophie Ravard
Germany:
Liz Kerry
Greece:
Michalis Daskalakis
Italy:
Rosalba di Bartolo
Toni
USA:
Tom Brodek
Unit Manager
Rolf Schneider
Location Managers
France:
Patrick Lhuillier
Germany:
Karl Heinz Hofman
Greece:
Panayotis Nikolaros
Italy:
Antonella Russo
Casting
Pat Golden
Sabine Schroth
France:
(Extras)
Michele Thérèse
Tollemer
Greece:
Cast-a-Diva
Anesa Tzirou
Artemis Leontidou
Assistant Directors
Michael Zens
Christoph Cheysson
Greece:
Antonis Remoundos
Xenophon Kotsaftis
USA:
Roe Sharon
Bob Curtis
Kate Eisemann
Screenplay
Rudy Wurlitzer
Based on the novel
Homo Faber by Max
Frisch
Directors of Photography
Yorgos Arvanitis
Pierre Lhomme
In colour
Special Effects Photography
Germany:
Kay Albrecht
Aerial Photography
USA:
Stan McLain
Camera Operator
France:
Gilbert Duhalde
Editor
Dagmar Hirtz



Foolled by love: Sam Shepard

Production Designer
Nicos Perakis
Art Directors
France:
Thierry François
USA:
Cherie Baker
Set Design
Benedikt Herforth
Set Decorators
France:
Frédérique Lauzier
Greece:
Doxi Nikolaidou
Pepe Arvaniti
Italy:
Itala Scandariato
USA:
Robin Schneider
Special Effects
Robbie Knott
Music
Stanley Myers
Music Performed by
The Munich
Philharmonic
Orchestra
Saxophone:
John Harle
Orchestrations
John Harle
Gary Carpenter
Gerry Butler
Songs
"Careless Love" by Ute
Lemper; "Blue Suede
Shoes" by Carl Perkins
Costume Design
Barbara Baum
Wardrobe
Marianne Schulz
Zoe Hale
Greece:
Maria Patheniadou
Maria Kontodima
Voula Alexopoulou
Italy:
Bruna Finocchi
USA:
Tim D'Arcy
Sandy Jensen
Make-up
Edwin Erffmann
Hannelore Faber
Greece:
Athina Tseregof
Leta Andreadi
Katerina Varhtaletou
USA:
Emily Katz
Titles/Opticals
Karl Kresling
Michael Otto
Supervising Sound Editor
Friedrich M. Dosch
Sound Editor
Dialogue:
Paul Green
ADR Editor
Michael Jacobi
Foley Editor
Andreas Biegler

Sound Recordists
Douglas B. Arnold
Music:
Alan Snelling
Dolby stereo
Sound Re-recordists
Tom Fleischman
Michael Kranz
Sound Effects
Eckart Goebel
Foley
Meloton
Mel Kutbay
Production Assistants
Kurt Werner Krusche
Greece:
Christos Karakapelis
Panayotis Mauraganis
Italy:
Andrea Tonti
USA:
Hilary Cousins
Will Bright
Hannah Clair Klein
David Topor
Robert Leveen
Karen Altman
Morgenstern

Cast
Sam Shepard
Walter Faber
Julie Delpy
Sabeth
Barbara Sukowa
Hannah
Dieter Kirchlechner
Herbert Hencke
Traci Lind
Charlene
Deborah Lee-Furness
Ivy
August Zinner
Joachim
Thomas Heinze
Kurt
Bill Dunn
Lewin
Peter Berling
Baptist
Lorna Farrar
Arlene
Kathleen Matiesen
Lady Stenographer
Lou Cuttell
New York Doorman
Charles Hayward
Joe
Irwin Wynn
Dick
James Mathers
Pilot
Perla Walter
Restroom Attendant
Roland de Chandenay
UNESCO Delegate
Jacques Martial
African UNESCO
Brigitte Catillou
Marianne
Philippe Morier
Genoud
Guillaume
Erica Lawson
Judith

9,000 feet
100 minutes

Filmed in English

Germany/France 1991

Director: Volker Schlöndorff

● Athens airport, 1957. Walter Faber, globetrotting hydroelectric engineer, bids a melancholy farewell to former mistress Hannah, an archaeologist, and recalls the events that drove them apart, both now and twenty years ago... A few months earlier, at an airport in Venezuela, he narrowly catches the flight to New York; the plane crash-lands in the Mexican desert, and while awaiting rescue Walter learns that a fellow passenger, Herbert Hencke, is the brother of an old friend, Joachim. Back in 1937, in Zurich, Walter and Joachim had been rivals for the love of Hannah; unexpectedly refusing Walter's offer of marriage when she became pregnant, Hannah married Joachim instead.

Herbert reports that they were later divorced, and that Joachim now lives on a Mexican tobacco plantation. On impulse, Walter joins Herbert on an expedition to visit his brother, only to find, after a perilous journey, that Joachim has hanged himself. Walter returns to New York and discovers that Ivy, a girlfriend he has been trying to discard, is installed in his apartment. He quickly leaves on an ocean liner to France, where he has been invited to address a Paris conference. During the voyage, he meets teenager Elizabeth Piper, whom he nicknames Sabeth, and an intense friendship develops until they reluctantly go their separate ways at Le Havre.

In Paris, recalling Sabeth's obsession with art, Walter visits the Louvre in the hope of finding her again; he is lucky, and they are reunited. The girl announces her intention of hitch-hiking through Europe to Rome, and Walter decides to supervise this adventure by driving her in a hired car. Stopping at a hotel en route, they become lovers. It is an idyllic romance until they reach Italy where, as Sabeth writes a postcard, Walter learns that her mother was formerly called Hannah Hencke. He has been making love to Joachim's daughter – or perhaps his own.

Hannah is working in Athens, and Sabeth plans to join her there. Admitting to having known her mother in the past, Walter is anxious to meet her again; he recalls that Hannah had intended to have an abortion before she married Joachim, and now he must establish the truth. Sabeth is injured in a fall and Walter takes her to hospital, where they are joined by Hannah. Mystified at Walter's reappearance, Hannah insists that Sabeth is Joachim's daughter, until Walter reveals that Joachim is dead and that he and Sabeth are lovers; then, distraught,

Hannah tells him that there was no abortion. Sabeth dies from an internal head wound, and Walter and Hannah, defeated by the tragedy to which they seem fated, part company at Athens airport.

● On screen, the main credit for the writing of *Voyager* is given to Rudy Wurlitzer, much-travelled scenarist whose own stories (*Two-Lane Blacktop*, say, or *Candy Mountain*) seem to have wandered through the years in persistent displacement from the highways of popular cinema. Recalling Wurlitzer's most celebrated elegy of exile, *Pat Garrett & Billy the Kid*, it is tempting to interpret the central figure of *Voyager* as another outlaw, doomed to perpetual motion within an unyielding trap.

But at least three other voices insist on being heard, and their intrusion complicates the issue, converting statement to babble. The film's basis is the novel *Homo Faber* by Swiss dramatist Max Frisch who, with a certain amount of Brechtian counterpoint and moral reprimand, uses the notion of a sinister collusion of coincidences to render his philandering hero powerless. This shifting of responsibility, whereby nothing is 'accidental' in the experiences of the main character, translates awkwardly to the screen, which has to resort to astonished comments of disbelief (somebody even says, with no apparent irony: "It certainly is a small world") to persuade us that forces are at work other than those of the storytellers.

The Frisch text, though, also has the timbre of mid-life crisis, and it is surely this which has caught the ear of Volker Schlöndorff, whose films for the past decade, whether derived from gutted Proust or adulterated Atwood, might broadly be seen as gatherings of oldish men. The Beirut journalist of *Circle of Deceit*, now turned engineer, continues to see in his collapsing environment (a large variety of ruins surrounds him during his travels) nothing more than the externalisation of his own crumbled integrity.

And by the kind of chance of which Frisch would doubtless approve, the other voice echoing within *Voyager* is that of Sam Shepard, whose own play *Fool for Love* features an incestuous passion which keeps drawing the wanderer back from the wilderness and throwing him out again. The device that underpins the *Voyager* story is the reluctance of most of its characters to speak plainly to each other, or to ask the most basic questions, or to answer them when asked, or to believe the answers they get. To build confusion and tragedy from this premise is not surprisingly a simple, if exasperating, process.

Philip Strick

Certificate
15
Distributor
First Independent
Production Company
Yog Productions
In association with
Initial Films
Executive Producer
Eric Fellner
**Executive-in-charge
of Production**
Alfred Pariser
Producer
Edward R. Pressman
Line Producer
Robert C. Rosen
**Production
Supervisor**
Laura Fattori
**Production
Co-ordinator**
Judith Goodman
Unit Managers
Luciano Pecoraro
Production:
Laura Fattori
Location Manager
Fabio Massimo
Dell'Orco
**Post-production
Supervisor**
Gregory A. Gale
Casting
USA:
Lou DiGiamo
Italy:
Francesco Cinieri
Voice:
Barbara Harris
Assistant Directors
Tony Brandt
Francesca Fuschini
Giandomenico Trillo
Screenplay
David Ambrose
Based on the novel by
Michael Mewshaw
**Director of
Photography**
Blasco Giurato
Colour
DeLuxe
Camera Operators
David Crone
Carlo Passari
Opticals
Pacific Title
Editor
Lee Percy
Production Designer
Aurelio Crugnola
Art Director
Luigi Quintili
Set Decorator
Franco Fumagalli
Set Dressers
Antonella Di Marco
Andrea Bolognesi
Emilia Burchiellano
Roberto De Simoni
Andrea Bolognesi
Massimiliano
Paopessa
Valerio Musy
Draughtsperson
Guilia Chiara
Crugnola
Special Effects
Grant Burdette
Music
Bill Conti
Music Extracts
"Di Provenza El Mar"
from *Aida* by
Giuseppe Verdi
Music Editors
Steve Livingston
Ken Johnson
Song
"Majestic Ride"
by William Ashford,
Robert J. Walsh
Costume Design
Ray Summers
Make-up Artists
Mario Michisanti
Maurizio Fazzini
Enzo Mastrantonio
Titles
F-Stop
**Supervising Sound
Editor**
Mike Le-Mare
Sound Editors
Karola Storr
Donlee Jorgensen
Paul Heslin



Refashioned: Andrew McCarthy

Sound Recordists
Bernard Bats
Brion Paccassi
John "Doc" Wilkinson
Matthew Iadarola
Grover Helsley
Music: Lee DeCarlo
**ADR/Foley
Recordists**
Robert Deschaine
David Jobe
Dolby stereo
Consultant:
Steve F.B. Smith
Foley Artists
John Post
Paul Heslin
ADR Voices
Carlo Scanduzzi
Ron Campbell
John Medici
Gino Gottarelli
Sav Ferrow
Tiziana Rivale
Michele Grimaldi
Frank Messina
Nick Powers
Denise Blaser
Anna Katarina
Rosanna Guidi
Chris Moscarella
Gabriela Rozzi
Miro Polo
Diz White
Nancy Vancon
Daamen Krall
Antonio Sabato Snr
**Production
Assistants**
Milena Bono
Benedetta Von
Normann
LA:
Mark Pressman
William Towne
Christopher Otto
Ann Greene
Stunt Co-ordinator
Franco Salamon
Stunts
Paolo Susani
Stefano Corsi
Franco Pacifico
Luigi Marturano
Claudio Pacifico
Alessandro Ponti
Marco Stefanelli
Massimiliano Ubaldi
Gianluca Petrazzi
Emiliano Novelli
Mario Novelli
Emilia Castiglionesi
Manrico Venditti
Vincenzo Maggio
Rocco Russo
Francesco Petrazzi
Claudio Zucchet
Miso Angelo
Marturano
Omero Capanna
Lorenzo Saraceno
Sergio Smacchi
Franco Moruzzi
Riccardo Mioni
Danilo Recanatesi
Giovanni Cianfriglia
Ivano Silveri
Stefano Mioni
Giovanna Ciacchi

Cast
Andrew McCarthy
David Raybourne
Sharon Stone
Alison King
Valeria Golino
Lia Spinelli
John Pankow
Italo Bianchi
George Murcell
Pierre Bernier
Mattia Sbragia
Giovanni
Roberto Posse
Lucio Spinelli
Thomas Elliot
Marco Spinelli
Carla Cassola
Lena
Darren Modder
Joe Bob
Carol Schneider
Mattie
Ron Williams
Lanky Youth
**Antonio degli
Schiavi**
Man in Café
Aldo Mengolini
Aldo Moro
Francesca Prandi
Woman
Stefano Molinari
Pietro Bontempo
Men
Luigi di Fiore
Terrorist
Maurizio Fardo
Questioner
Luigi Amodeo
Piero Gagliani
Lou Castel
Round-faced Man
Salvatore Billa
Natale Nazareno
Cops
Franco Beltramme
Cyrus Elias
Detectives
Fabio Traversa
Bearded Man
Dick Cavett
Ben Gershon
Fiammetta Baralla
Bernier's Wife
Alessandra Marson
University Woman
Giuseppe Zarbo
Mattie's Boyfriend
Mario Novelli
Gunman
Luciano Foti
Guard
Elena Cantarone
Moro's Interpreter
Cecilia Todeschini
BBC Woman
Maria Carolina
Salomé
University Youth

9,990 feet
111 minutes

USA 1991

Director: John Frankenheimer

January, 1978. American journalist David Raybourne returns to Rome as riots erupt around the militant activities of the Red Brigades. He resumes contact with his friend Italo Bianchi, a teacher at the university and the cousin of David's lover Lia Spinelli. David returns to work at *American News*, a newspaper run on the cheap by Pierre Bernier, an entrepreneur with supposed CIA connections. One of Italo's students, Piero Gagliani, is kidnapped; the rumour circulates that he is in league with the Red Brigades, but he is later found dead. David is reunited with Lia, who is attempting to divorce her husband, but on leaving her flat he is attacked by two men and warned to stay away from her.

Alison King, a freelance photographer, is on the scene during a Brigade bank raid, and her pictures are published in *Time* magazine. David meets her at a party thrown by Bernier, which is raided by the Brigade. David embarks on a money-spinning writing venture, a novel in which the Red Brigades kidnap Prime Minister Aldo Moro. Alison confronts David with his past as a radical activist, and insists that they work together on his book about the Brigades. David denies all knowledge of such a book, and initially refuses her advances, but eventually they begin an affair.

Alison searches David's flat and discovers the novel, which she takes to be a factual report on the Brigades. She mentions the book to Italo who, unknown to her and David, is working with the Brigades; he had become involved through his lover Gagliani, whose staged kidnapping ended in his accidental death. Under orders from his superior, Giovanni, Italo steals David's manuscript. Finding his flat ransacked, David goes to *American News*, arriving just as Bernier is shot dead by the Brigade, having been implicated in David's book.

David meets Italo, who tells him Moro is really to be kidnapped; Giovanni arrives to interrogate David, but Italo intervenes and is



Sharon Stone, Andrew McCarthy

shot dead. David rescues Alison from a Brigade trap and they escape. They contact Lia, but she is also a Brigade member and hands them over to Giovanni. While they are being interrogated, Lia is questioned on her commitment to the cause. After Moro is kidnapped in reality, David and Alison are driven away, apparently to be shot, but are released after Lia is executed in their place. David and Alison publish their book together, and David appears on *American* television to promote it, with Alison commenting by satellite from Beirut, where she is now working.

Films that place intrepid American newshounds against the backdrops of the world's great trouble spots generally show less regard for international politics than for their heroes' personal development. Here, a disillusioned radical begins by cynically attempting to make a fiction of the world around him, until he acquires a lover with a passionate interest in the real world (although there is nothing to suggest that the book he finally writes is any different as a result). In Alison's case, any 'real' world will do - Rome, Beirut or the Saigon she nostalgically evokes in one of the film's most embarrassing scenes.

When David says he wants his book to be like *Day of the Jackal*, he pinpoints the problem - as with that novel's imagined attack on De Gaulle, the Moro abduction simply serves as a historical signpost, as well as a lurid selling point, but there is no attempt to examine the complexities behind it. The Brigade members have no real political motivation or identity - their sinister knitted masks come off to reveal even more sinister faces with unkempt beards and wild eyes. They ruthlessly manipulate 'good' people like Italo who, as the film reveals with surpassing coyness, has been led into bad ways by his homosexual inclinations.

The flaws in the film's premise become transparent in the final scene. David appears on television talking to chat-show host Dick Cavett (here 'Ben Gershon') about the book he has published with Alison - a novel with photos. One wonders how they could have gotten away with such a bizarre hybrid, particularly since they now have a real story to tell. But then Alison herself was unable to tell the difference between David's fiction and hard news. David's turn on the show is quickly followed by an Iranian diplomat. This could be read as a comment on the way that world events are briskly ushered in and out of fashion by the media - if so, it is a tendency in which this film happily colludes.

Jonathan Romney

Reviews

William Green reviews every retail/retail premiere video and Mark Kermode every rental/rental premiere video released this month

★ Highlights

Reviews in **Monthly Film Bulletin (MFB)** and **Sight and Sound** are cited in parentheses

Rental

Class Action

FoxVideo 1869

USA 1990

Certificate 15 Director Michael Apted
★ Gene Hackman and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio clash in court as opposing lawyers – who also happen to be father and daughter. Gripping. (S&S July 1991)

Hudson Hawk

20.20 Vision NVT 12456

USA 1991

Certificate 15
Director Michael Lehmann
★ Lehmann's underrated, anarchic action-comedy is ripe for reappraisal. Bruce Willis blusters through as the eponymous thief. (S&S July 1991)

Marked for Death

FoxVideo 1865

USA 1990

Certificate 15 Director Dwight H. Little
Action man Steven Seagal fights black drug dealers in this racist piece of nonsense. (S&S June 1991)

Mermaids

MCEG Virgin VOR 141

USA 1990

Certificate 15
Director Richard Benjamin
A damp whimsical fantasy. Cher cavorts with her daughters, wrestles with Bob Hoskins and comes to terms with life. (S&S May 1991)

The Naked Gun 2½

The Smell of Fear

CIC VHB 2547

USA 1991

Certificate 15 Director David Zucker
★ Terrific sequel to the side-splitting original, avoiding the usual toilet humour and replacing it with good farce. (S&S August 1991)

The Object of Beauty

Buena Vista D512712

USA/UK 1991

Certificate 15 Director Michael Lindsay-Hogg
Andie MacDowell and John Malkovich star in this genteel BBC TV drama, once more at home on the small-screen. (S&S November 1991)

Omen IV: The Awakening

FoxVideo 1919

USA 1991

Certificate 15 Directors Jorge Montesi, Dominique Othenin-Gérard
Devil's spawn Delia carries the Prince of Darkness in her pre-pubescent womb in this daft TV vehicle produced by Omen diehard Harvey Bernhard. (S&S December 1991)

The Pope Must Die

RCA/Columbia CVT 13220

UK 1991

Certificate 15 Director Peter Richardson
Laughs are surprisingly few in this mildly heretical farce. An ex-mechanic (Robbie Coltrane) is accidentally elected to the papal seat. (S&S August 1991)

Prayer of the Rollerboys

First Independent VA 20143

USA 1990

Certificate 15 Director Rick King
Surf Nazis Must Die meets *Rollerball*

in a tacky teen-adventure starring handsome youth Corey Haim. (S&S August 1991)

Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves

Warner 12220

USA 1991

Certificate PG Director Kevin Reynolds
Anglo-American accents and camp antics abound in Reynolds' latterday swashbuckling movie. Alan Rickman steals the show as the fiendish Sheriff of Nottingham. Also available to buy. (S&S August 1991)

Thelma & Louise

Warner 52355

USA 1991

Certificate 15 Director Ridley Scott
★ Scott's road movie proves the perfect vehicle for the talents of Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon. Movie of the month! (S&S July 1991)

Too Hot to Handle

Hollywood Pictures D911502

USA 1991

Certificate 15 Director Jerry Rees
Bawdy comedy – released in the USA as *The Marrying Man*. Alec Baldwin is a billionaire playboy lusting after sultry singer Kim Basinger. (S&S August 1991)

Rental premiere

Angel in Red

20.20 Vision CVT 12481

USA 1991

Certificate 18 Director William Duprey
Producer Mike Elliott Screenplay Catherine Cyran, based on a story by



A woman's place – Geena Davis

Joan Freeman Alden, Robert Alden
Lead Actors Leslie Bega, Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Pamela D'Pella 75 minutes
 Low-budget exploitation movie (that alludes to Robert Vincent O'Neil's *Angel* and Abel Ferrara's *Ms. 45: Angel of Vengeance*) about five prostitutes who take revenge on a murderous pimp.

Crackdown

20.20 Vision CVT 12483
 USA 1990

Certificate 15 Director Louis Morneau
 Producer Luis Llosa Screenplay Ross Bell, Daryl Haney *Lead Actors* Cliff De Young, Robert Beltran, Jamie Rose, Gerald Anthony 83 minutes
 Cheap action movie. A chalk-and-cheese pair of cops join forces to crack an international drug ring.

Dread's Revenge: Captain Power and the Soldiers of the Future

Genesis/Excalibur EXC 0026
 USA 1991

Certificate PG Directors Otta Hanus, Jorge Montes *Producers* John Copeland, David Thornton Screenplay Larry Ditillio, Michael Straczynski *Lead Actors* Tim Duncan, Peter MacNeil, Sven Thorsen, Maurice Dean Wint 89 minutes
 More cheap sci-fi thrills. Train-spotters note that Jorge Montes also co-directed *Omen IV*.

Hangfire

20.20 Vision NVT 12495
 USA 1990

Certificate 18 Director Peter Maris
 Producers Brad Krevoy, Steve Stabler Screenplay Brian D. Jeffries *Lead Actors* Jan-Michael Vincent, Brad Davis, George Kennedy, James Tolkan 86 minutes
 Unremarkable action movie about a murderer and a band of renegade inmates holding a town hostage. Explosive battles ensue.

Happy Together

Guild 8659
 USA 1989

Certificate 15 Director Mel Damski
 Producer Jere Henshaw Screenplay Craig J. Nevius *Lead Actors* Patrick Dempsey, Helen Slater, Dan Schneider, Marius Weyers 99 minutes
 Adolescent fantasy about a straight-laced boy sharing a room with a raunchy young woman. The talented Dempsey deserves better.

An Inconvenient Woman

Odyssey ODY 310
 USA 1991

Certificate 15 Director Larry Elikann
 Producer Cleve Landsberg Screenplay John Pielmeier, based on the novel by Dominick Dunne *Lead Actors*



In another place – Audrey Hepburn

Rebecca DeMornay, Jason Robards, Jill Eikenberry 182 minutes
 TV mini-series adaptation of Dunne's pot-boiler. A billionaire's mistress is caught up in an investigation into the murder of a wealthy socialite.

Love or Money?

RCA/Columbia 11644
 USA 1988

Certificate 15 Director Todd Hallowell
 Producer Elyse England Screenplay Bart Davis, Elyse England, Michael Zausner *Lead Actors* Timothy Daly, Haviland Morris, Kevin McCarthy, Shelley Fabares 92 minutes
 Two estate agents fight off their corrupt rivals as well as maintaining a regular love life. A standard 'heart-warming' comedy-drama.

Memories of Midnight

Genesis/Excalibur EXC 0027 (2 Tapes)
 USA 1991

Certificate 15 Director Gary Nelson
 Producer Michael Viner Screenplay Paul Wheeler, Richard Hack, Michael Viner, from the novel by Sidney Sheldon *Lead Actors* Jane Seymour, Omar Sharif 186 minutes
 Seymour and Sharif breeze through a plot of love, lust, corruption and murder in this TV mini-series.

The 1001 Nights

20.20 Vision NVT 12049
 France 1990

Certificate 15 Director Philippe De Broca Producer André Djaoui Screenplay Philippe De Broca, Jerome Tonnerre *Lead Actors* Thierry Lhermitte, Gérard Jugnot, Stéphane Friess, Vittorio Gassman 86 minutes
 De Broca blends ancient Arab legend and disposable modern humour in an extravagant romantic comedy.

Pink Lightning

FoxVideo 1949
 USA 1991

Certificate 15 Director Carol Monpere
 Executive Producer Marianne Moloney

Screenplay Carol Monpere *Lead Actors* Sarah Buxton, Martha Byrne, Jennifer Blanc, Jennifer Guthrie 87 minutes
 ★ Lively, girls-own romantic-adventure set in 60s California. A teenager learns about love and life on the eve of her marriage. Not a patch on *Shag* (from which it draws inspiration), but the upbeat acting and bouncy dialogue keep things cruising along.

Red Wind

CIC VHA 1522
 USA 1991

Certificate 18 Director Alan Metzger
 Producers Tom Noonan, Oscar L. Costo Screenplay Tom Noonan *Lead Actors* Lisa Hartman, Philip Casnoff 89 minutes
 Trashy TV movie about transvestism and sado-masochism. A sex psychologist becomes involved with a mysterious woman who is clearly her boyfriend in drag. The dopey dénouement is unstartling. Silly title too.

They Came from Outer Space

CIC VHA 1528
 USA 1991

Certificate PG Director Dennis Donnelly Producer Lori-Etta Taub Screenplay Peter Baloff, Dave Wollert *Lead Actors* Stuart Fratkin, Dean Cameron 89 minutes
 Irritating wise guys Fratkin and Cameron (of *Ski School*) fail to get laid in a tame extraterrestrial sex comedy.

'Till I Kissed Ya'

Warner 12326
 USA 1991

Certificate 15 Director/Producer Michael Zinberg Screenplay Karen Clark, based on a short story by Michael Zinberg *Lead Actors* Corin Nemec, Diedre Hall, Rebecca Cross 91 minutes
 First-love TV movie set in 60s Texas. A Jewish high-school boy falls for a Catholic beauty with tearful consequences. The usual period soundtrack features heavily.

Retail

Arsenal

Castle Hending HEN 2 206
 USSR 1929 Price £14.99

Certificate PG

Director Alexander Dovzhenko
 ★ Silent, poetic film – made under the shadow of the Party – in praise of the workers involved in the social revolution in the USSR. B/W (MFB No. 524)

Breakfast at Tiffany's

CIC Classic VHR 2086
 USA 1961 Price £9.99

Certificate PG Director Blake Edwards
 ★ Audrey Hepburn as the charming, high-spirited Holly Golightly who hooks George Peppard. Based on the novel by Truman Capote. (MFB No. 334)

Cape Fear

CIC Classic VHR 1587
 USA 1961 Price £9.99

Certificate 15 Director J. Lee Thompson
 ★ Ex-con Robert Mitchum takes revenge on the lawyer (Gregory Peck) who was responsible for his incarceration. Taut and uncompromising. B/W (MFB No. 348)

Earth (Zemlya)

Castle Hending HEN 2 205
 USSR 1930 Price £14.99

Certificate PG

Director Alexander Dovzhenko



Hymn to the Earth

★ Dovzhenko's second major film is a visual pleasure, dealing with the efforts of a Ukrainian community to fight off the local landlord opposed to collectivisation. English titles B/W (MFB No. 553)

The Freshman

RCA/Columbia CVR 21575
 USA 1990 Price £10.99

Certificate PG

Director Andrew Bergman
 Penniless film student Matthew Broderick gets involved with a mobster's daughter. Marlon Brando lowers his dignity by playing a comic Mafia godfather. (MFB No. 683)

I Love You to Death

RCA/Columbia CVR 21574

USA 1990 Price £10.99

Certificate 15

Director Lawrence Kasdan

Self-indulgent black comedy about a deserted wife (Tracey Ullman) trying to get her husband killed. (MFB No. 680)

The Legend of the Holy Drinker (La leggenda del santo bevitore)

Artificial Eye ART 021

Italy 1988 Price £15.99

Certificate PG Director Ermanno Olmi

★ Rutger Hauer in a gentle adaptation of Joseph Roth's novel about a bibulous tramp in Paris, haunted by past visions and blessed by a miracle. Subtitles (MFB No. 668)

Loulou

Artificial Eye ART 019

France 1980 Price £15.99

Certificate 18 Director Maurice Pialat

★ Gérard Depardieu throws himself into the role of a lowlife layabout tolerating the infatuation of a middle class businesswoman (Isabelle Huppert). Subtitles (MFB No. 566)

Mirror (Zerkalo)

Artificial Eye ART 020

USSR 1974 Price £15.99

Certificate U Director Andrei Tarkovsky

★ A beautiful, dreamlike autobiographical account of Tarkovsky's youth and country childhood. A family affair, with his



A poetic childhood in 'The Mirror'

poet father reading his own poetry and his mother appearing as herself. Subtitles (MFB No. 554)

Monkey Business

CIC Classic VHR 1488

USA 1931 Price £9.99

Certificate U

Director Norman Z. MacLeod

★ The first Marx Brothers film to be made in Hollywood. The brothers stow away on a luxury liner and then try to disembark by impersonating Maurice Chevalier! Imperishable. (MFB No. 56)

Othello

Castle Hendring HEN 2 210

USSR 1955 Price £14.99

Certificate PG Director Sergei Yutkevich

★ Bold interpretation of Shakespeare's play – liberating it from the stage by setting it in a real

castle beside the sea. Director-actor Sergei Bondarchuk plays Othello. Subtitles (MFB No. 283)

Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves

Price £12.99 (see Rental)

She's Out of Control

RCA/Columbia CVR 21661

USA 1989 Price £10.99

Certificate 15 Director Stan Dragoti
Tasteless comedy about a solo father (Tony Danza) who interferes in his teenage daughter's love life. (MFB No. 679)

Shirley Valentine

CIC Video VHR 2404

USA 1989 Price £10.99

Certificate 15 Director Lewis Gilbert
A Liverpool housewife (Pauline Collins) escapes domesticity and

takes up with a Greek waiter (Tom Conti) while on holiday. Collins gives this stagey comedy some life. (MFB No. 670)

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

Virgin VVD 953

USA 1990 Price £10.99

Certificate PG Director Steve Barron

Well past their sell-by date, the teen turtles perform martial arts against harmless villains. (MFB No. 683)

Uncle Buck

CIC Video VHR 1440

USA 1989 Price £10.99

Certificate 15 Director John Hughes
A slobbish John Candy is drafted in to look after his brother's three cute kids. Macaulay Culkin (*Home Alone* fame) makes his first screen appearance. (MFB No. 673)

We're No Angels

CIC Classic VHR 2524

USA 1954 Price £9.99

Certificate U Director Michael Curtiz
★ Humphrey Bogart, Aldo Ray and Peter Ustinov as three convicts on the run – a good comedy that was remade not nearly so well by Neil Jordan in 1989. (MFB No. 258)

Retail premiere

Twin Peaks

Screen Entertainment

SE 9141, 9142, 9143, 9144

USA 1989 Price £12.99 each (4 tapes)

Certificate 15 Directors David Lynch, Mark Frost, Tim Hunter, Caleb Deschanel
Producers/Writers Mark Frost, David Lynch
Photography Ron Garcia
Lead Actors Kyle MacLachlan, Michael Ontkean, Sherilyn Fenn
540 minutes

★ Eleven episodes of the weird and wonderful TV series – the remainder will follow in the spring. (Pilot reviewed in MFB No. 674)

The Wild Wild World of Jayne Mansfield

Mondo Movies ISF 008

USA 1967 Price £12.99

Certificate 18 Directors Arthur Knight, Joel Holt, Charles W. Broun Jr
Producer Dick Randall
Featuring Jayne Mansfield, Mickey Margitay, Rocky Roberts
90 minutes
Prurient 60s 'documentary-travelogue', touring the seamier sights of Rome, Paris and LA with Jayne Mansfield. This film was once thought lost – it's a pity someone found it again.



A strange affair: Isabelle Huppert in 'Loulou'

Letters are welcome, and should be addressed to the Editor at Sight and Sound, British Film Institute, 21 Stephen Street, London W1P 1PL. Facsimile 071 436 2327

Acting up

From Gerry Barry

Raymond Durnat's piece on acting (S&S January) was welcome: it's about time someone started to recognise the actor as auteur rather than as a director's pawn. And it was good in the same issue to see Gus Van Sant paying tribute to River Phoenix's part in *My Own Private Idaho*.

But I was sorry to see that Raymond Durnat tended to oppose film acting and theatrical acting as if they were different species – particularly so when he recognises the extraordinary gifts of Chaplin and Mike Reid of *Eastenders* (nice democratic touch there, Raymond), neither of whom began life on film. Andy Medhurst's review of comedy in the same issue was better at registering the continuum of acting from the stand-up (Mike Reid was a stand-up comic, if I remember rightly) to the film actor. That continuum is particularly evident in Britain, where the acting traffic across the arts – theatre, television, film – is so visible.

I was sorry to see Michael O'Pray in his interview with Tilda Swinton pulling in Brecht (oh no, not again) to defend and praise Derek Jarman's non-naturalist practices when there are English popular traditions more relevant to the delicious vulgarity of Jarman.

The piece I'd like to see is one that tried to show how, say, Mike Reid has drawn on his stand-up routines in his performance, as in *Eastenders*. It's not only Shakespeare with Will Kemp who saw the point of using comics in 'serious' work.

Manchester

Gay names

From Gillian Kemp

I would like to take issue with what seemed to me an insistence on the part of Amy Taubin (S&S January) to identify Gus Van Sant and his film *My Own Private Idaho* as a gay film-maker and gay film, respectively. What qualifies as gay, or lesbian and gay art has been much debated in media from fiction to photography: is it anything produced by someone who identifies as gay, or anything produced by someone known, or thought, to have had same-sex relationships; or does the work itself have to make a political statement, include same-sex sex, focus on a strong emotional link between two characters of the same gender, or simply have a view of the world which could be said to derive from being on its margins?

It seemed to me that Gus Van Sant was trying to say throughout the interview that though he is "openly gay", this is just one aspect of himself – and are other directors, or their critics, categorised, asked to identify themselves, or liable to have their work judged as openly heterosexual? It seemed ironic that even the overtly sexual relationship in the film was unintended by the director, but made sexual by the actor – i.e., the film as Van Sant

conceived it did not have a 'gay' sexual relationship in it. From his own description of the film, it seemed clear that what Van Sant was interested in was to look at different kinds of relationships, and that he did not see his work as saying something specific about gay relationships, or as "making a gay political statement", as is obviously the case with Derek Jarman's *Edward II*. As with *Young Soul Rebels*, would anyone think of describing the film as half heterosexual, because it also has heterosexual relationships in it?

Having said this, I find the willingness of *Sight and Sound* to engage in sexual and gender politics a positive sign. It is a relief to find a magazine with which one merely has to quibble.

Newcastle

Costume politics

From Claire Grant

It's a pity that James Saynor's review (S&S January) of some recent television series didn't recognise just how important are 'costume dramas' such as *Clarissa*. Everyone (including your magazine) laments the lack of good strong contemporary drama on television – and presumably doesn't recognise costume drama as contemporary because of its period costume.

Clarissa, *Portrait of a Marriage* and *Oranges are Not the Only Fruit* (period drama of a kind) have had much more to say about today's sexual politics than a great deal of what passes for contemporary drama on television. But of course, like soaps, costume drama is a woman's form – and isn't to be taken seriously, is it?

Nottingham

Squashing the past

From John Beard

I was interested to read Michael Eaton's 'Condemned to repeats', (S&S December), in which he pointed out the current vogue for film based on stories with elements of 'beyond the grave' or reincarnation. Eaton seems to attribute the popularity of such films to the 'innocence' of their adolescent audiences. But I would like to put forward a more serious, if somewhat more speculative explanation. As the 1990s advance, we

find ourselves living through a *fin de siècle* in which the sense that the past lies heavily is very evident. The last *fin de siècle* produced *Dracula* and the myth of the vampire; the 'star' of more recent years has been the awful Freddy – someone who wouldn't die.

So might not the surfeit of 'remakes' and of resurrection movies (*Flatliners*, etc.) be a sign that we know we have to wrestle with the past, but that in remaking films (i.e. literally making something new of the past) we can try to shake off the necessity of doing this?

London N16

Index

From Derek Jacobs

I buy the magazine each month and would be grateful to know if you are going to produce an index for each volume?

Derek Jacobs

Leeds

The Editor: An elaborate index for S&S Vol 1 is being prepared and will be available from the date of the first issue of Vol 2.

Arty

From Stephen Tell

After the *Obsessions* of R. B. Kitaj and Tom Phillips, and after Derek Jarman, *Edward II* and the art school, we now – in Amy Taubin's piece on Gus Van Sant (S&S January) – have US film-makers and the art school scene. Are art schools really so important to film-making – or are you a timeshare owner in one?

London W12

Who's in charge?

From Graham Smith

The piece on Jodie Foster by Ruby Rich (S&S December) was informative and interesting, if at times a bit hard-going – the first sentence nearly put me off. But it should have asked itself what is the relation between a director and an actor.

In certain ways, Ruby Rich's article simply inverted the usual obsession with the director as god and made the actor god instead. In *The Accused*, for example, how much is that performance down to Foster, and how much down to Jonathan Kaplan, the director? What we need are studies which follow the process of film-making, logging the relationships between actors and directors in particular films.

Exeter

Addenda and corrigenda

● *The Bridge* (reviewed S&S Vol 1, No 9, p41). The director of this film is Sydney Macartney, not spelled as printed.

● *Teen Agent* (reviewed S&S Vol 1, No 6, p59). The original US title of this film is *If Looks Could Kill*.

● Jodie Foster Filmography (S&S Vol 1, No 8, p10). *My Sister, Hank* was a film shown in the *Wonderful World of Disney* series. Foster also appeared in *Adam 12* (1970), *Daniel Boone* (1970) and *SFX* (*San Francisco International*, 1970). (Information supplied by Steinar Haug.)

Double lives: when Foster the director directs Foster the actress, who's in charge?



Open architecture tv

Benjamin Woolley

"If you walk down the street and ask anybody, 'What's wrong with television?', Nicholas Negroponte, head of MIT's influential Media Laboratory told a group of Canadian businessmen in 1989, "you will not encounter a single person who will answer 'resolution'".

Yet last December, EC telecommunications ministers, meeting to discuss the future of technical broadcasting standards in the light of the first lot being blown out of the water by Sky TV and the Astra satellite, could talk of little else. They decided to commit themselves to the introduction of a high-definition TV (HDTV) service offering pin-sharp picture quality in the mid-90s. A few days earlier, Japan, which stopped discussing the issue several years ago, had launched just such a service.

The temptation may be to throw up our hands in despair, as yet again Japan moves ahead, that yet again they make more, more, while we make jaw, jaw. But we should recall Negroponte's words. Who cares about resolution? Who wants high-resolution, high-definition pictures when most of us are content to watch badly tuned, maladjusted TV sets in appalling lighting conditions?

There is a growing belief in the US that on this occasion Japan has made a mistake, one that Europe is set to repeat. The Japanese and European idea of HDTV is conventional, 'analogue' technology with more knobs on. It means that television will essentially remain as it is – a passive medium, imposing its programming on its audience.

Negroponte, his Media Lab and a grow-

ing number of technologists in the US are promoting a radically different, 'digital', computer-age approach, one which they hope will ultimately revolutionise all visual media. HDTV represents 'dead technology', Negroponte argues: "The television is probably the stupidest consumer home electronics product. Your refrigerator has more microprocessors".

What we all need, according to the Media Lab, is 'open architecture TV'. This entails turning the TV set into a computer that can process all the digital information that will come into the home – via cable and satellite as well as the telephone network (good old terrestrial broadcasting, with its limited information-carrying capacity, does not have much future in either a digital or HDTV future). The smart TV set will display this information in accordance with the specific capabilities of the equipment (more expensive sets will be able to deal with more information and display it, should the user wish, in more sparkingly sharp resolution) and the viewer's needs. In such a regime, the old, arbitrary distinctions between print and visual media will gradually disappear, as the smart TV set's printer takes over the business of publishing a personalised newspaper each morning, featuring stories taken direct off newsagency wires and electronic mail boxes by an 'agent', a software program that knows its owner's interests and downloads stories that are likely to appeal to them.

According to the Media Lab open architecture scenario, broadcasters will not just send 'facsimiles' of TV pictures, they will ultimately send the information needed to construct the picture itself. Perhaps the

The television is probably the stupidest consumer home electronics product. Your refrigerator has more microprocessors

scenery for a drama could be sent in the form of a three-dimensional geometrical model that the TV receiver's computer reconstructs for itself. The broadcaster will then only need to send the picture data for the characters and props that populate the set, which the TV integrates with the scenery, and which viewers, or rather 'users', will be able to manipulate. Computer models of film sets might be sold much like real estate – hyperreal estate, as it would inevitably be called – which users would then use as the backdrop for different dramas, including, of course, ones in which they themselves feature.

One day, Negroponte hopes, such digital technology will make visual media interactive. Going to the cinema will become more like going to the fairground, watching TV coverage will converge with Nintendo games. Being absorbed in a programme will take on a more literal meaning. TV will become something you do rather than have done to you, a scenario William Gibson described in *Count Zero*: "He checked the time on the kiosk's Coke clock. His mother would be back from Boston by now, had to be, or else she'd miss one of her favourite soaps. New hole in her head... she'd been whining for years about static and resolution and sensory bleed-over, so she'd finally swung the credit to go to Boston for some cheapass replacement... He knew her, yeah, how she'd come through the door with a wrapped bottle under her arm, not even take her coat off, just go straight over and jack into the Hitachi, soap her brains out good for six solid hours. Her eyes would unfocus, and sometimes, if it was a really good episode, she'd drool a little".

Professor Potemkin's competition

Christmas is not quite over for those dozens of readers who responded to our December competition and are no doubt all agog to discover whether their captions were captivating enough to secure a prize copy of 'The Time Out Film Guide'. So many and varied were the entries, that I determined to arrange a special reward for the runners-up – for example, an organised coach tour of 'Cape Fear', or a weekend break with the Addams family.

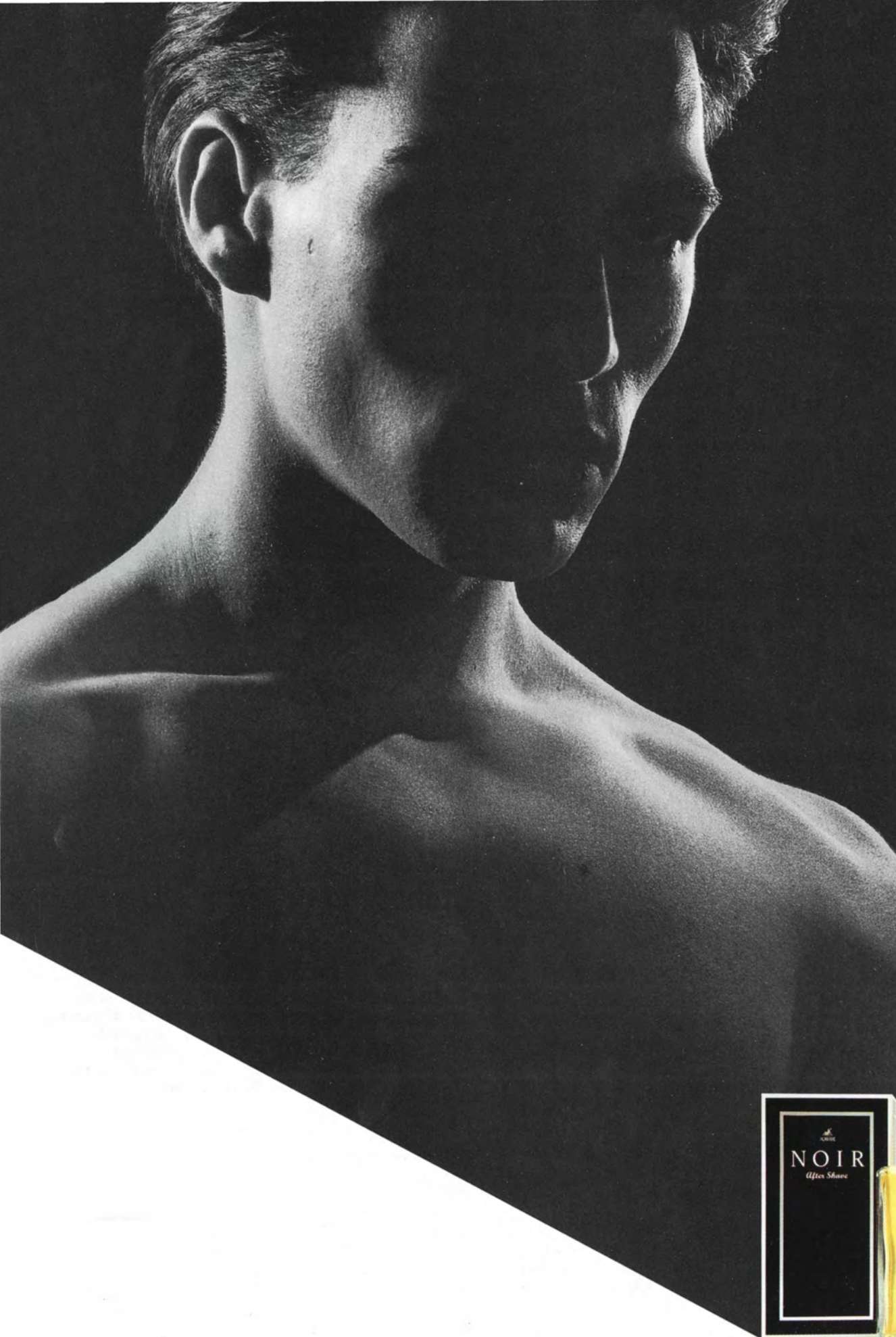
Meanwhile, nice fat copies of the 'Time Out' compendium go to three fortunate applicants. They correctly identified the relevant film as 'Lola Montes', and the circus performers as Peter Ustinov (ringmaster) and Martine Carol (the lovely Lola).



Nick Bartlett of London sized up the situation with this exchange. She: 'Why do men put me on a pedestal?' He: 'To see your legs better, my dear'. N. Weisberg of Arhus, Denmark offered this rebuke. He: 'No, no Lola – this is a non-smoking circus, even up there'. And Eve Tate of Leicester summed it all up with: 'And finally, we thank Mr Fellini for his help in this year's Christmas Day broadcast'.

This month's rules are the same as ever. Identify the characters, invent brief and brilliant dialogue and send your findings post haste to Professor Potemkin, Sight and Sound, BFI, 21 Stephen Street, London W1P 1PL. By 15 February, please. From next month, Sight and Sound will be celebrating an early spring with its new competition.

Copyright © The British Film Institute, 1992. Registered corporate members of the British Film Institute wishing to reproduce individual synopses or reviews as notes for their screenings may do so without permission, provided that these notes are distributed free of charge, that Sight and Sound is credited as the source of the material, and that the above Copyright is also reproduced. Sole agents for USA: Eastern News Distributors Inc. Sight and Sound (USPS 496-040) is published monthly by the British Film Institute. Subscription price is \$51.00 per year. Second-class postage paid at Sandusky, Ohio and additional mailing offices. Postmaster send change of address to Sight and Sound, Creative Subscription Services, 1671 East 16th Street, Suite 176 Brooklyn, NY 11229-2901. Newsstand distribution by Eastern News Distributors, 1130 Cleveland Road, Sandusky, OH 44870.



Noir. Without a shadow of a doubt.

EXCLUSIVELY
AVAILABLE FOR MAIL ORDER

CLASSIC FILMS



The Four Feathers



That Hamilton Woman

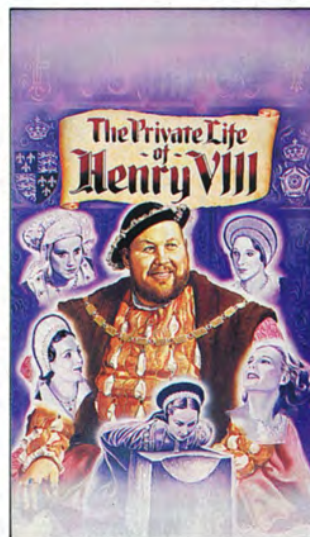
THE KORDA collection

The fully restored The Four Feathers, Alexander Korda's 1939 technicolor classic adventure story starring Ralph Richardson, John Clements and June Duprez is available now for the first time on video.

Together with That Hamilton Woman starring Vivien Leigh and Laurence Olivier, The Private Life Of Henry VIII starring Charles Laughton and Merle Oberon and The Ghost Goes West starring Robert Donat, The Four Feathers is available exclusively to mail order, simply by completing the order form below.

Buy all four and save £5.00.

Please allow 28 days for delivery.



The Private Life Of
Henry VIII



The Ghost Goes West

To: Korda Video Offer, PO Box 100, Colne, Lancs, BB8 2JS.

Please send me: _____ video(s) (as indicated in the boxes provided) at £14.99 each, including postage and packing

☐ The Four Feathers ☐ The Private Life Of Henry VIII ☐ That Hamilton Woman ☐ The Ghost Goes West ☐ or all four for £54.96

I enclose a cheque/PO for £ _____ made payable to Central Television Enterprises or please charge my Access/Visa/Barclaycard

Card No. Expiry Date Signature _____

Name _____ Address _____

Post Code _____

K1 Offer closes 31st March 1992 Promoter: PSL Marketing (Blackburn) Ltd. Promotions Centre, Glenfield Park, Philips Road, Blackburn. BB1 5PF

